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BY IVAN TURGENIEFF

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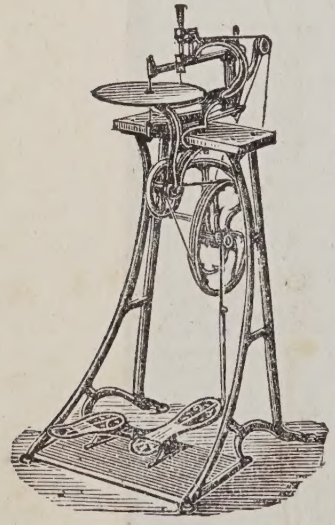

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DIMITRI ROUDINE

A NOVEL

BY

IVAN TURGÉNIEFF

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH AND GERMAN VERSIONS

(*Reprinted from* EVERY SATURDAY.)

LONDON:
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DIMITRI ROUDINE.

I.

It was a quiet summer morning. The sun was already high in the cloudless heavens, but the dew was still glistening in the fields. A fragrant breeze was blowing from the scarcely awakened valleys; and in the damp and silent forest the birds were singing their morning song. At the top of a hill covered with growing rye, was to be seen a small village. Walking towards this village, on a narrow side path, was a young woman in a white muslin dress a round straw hat on her head, and with a sunshade in her hand. A little page, dressed as a Cossack, was following her a few paces behind.

She advanced without haste, and as if she were enjoying her walk. All about her the long, gently-rolling waves,

now of a silvery gray, now tinted with red, ran with soft murmur over the bowing rye. Overhead the larks were loudly singing. The young woman was coming from her own village, which lay at about the distance of a verst from the one towards which her steps were bent; her name was Alexandra Paulovna Lipina. She was a widow, childless, and tolerably well off; she lived with her brother, Sergius Paulovitch Volinzoff, who had been a captain in the army. He was a single man, and managed her affairs.

Alexandra Paulovna reached the village, stopped at the first house, a very old and dilapidated peasant's cabin, and ordered her page to go in and inquire about the health of the woman who lived in it. He soon returned, followed by an infirm old peasant with a white beard.

"Well, how is she?" asked Alexandra Paulovna.

"She is still alive," answered the old man.

"Can I go in?"

"Why not? Of course."

Alexandra Paulovna entered the hut. It was small, close, and full of smoke. Some one was lying sobbing on

the bench near the stove. Alexandra Paulovna looked around and saw in the dim light the yellow, wrinkled face of an old woman, whose head was enveloped in a checked cloth. A thick cloak covered her nearly to her neck; she was breathing with difficulty, and feebly moving her thin arms. Alexandra Paulovna stepped up to the old woman and placed her hand gently on her brow; it was burning hot.

"How do you feel, Matrona?" she asked, bending over the bench.

"Dear me, dear me!" groaned the old woman, after she had recognized Alexandra Paulovna. "Very ill, very ill, my dear! My last hour has come, my dove!"

"With God's help there is hope yet, Matrona. Did you take the medicine I sent you?"

The old woman gave a sad groan, but did not answer. She had not understood the question.

"She took it," explained the old man, who remained standing at the door.

Alexandra Paulovna turned towards him.

"Is there no one but you with her?" she asked.

"There's her granddaughter, but she never stays. She can't sit in one place; she's so restless! She's too lazy to give her grandmother even a glass of water. I am too old; what can I do?"

"Might she not be taken to the hospital?"

"No! Why take her to a hospital? It's all the same where one dies. She has lived her life. It seems to be God's will. She can't stir from that bench. How could she get to the hospital? If we were to lift her up, she would die."

"Ah!" groaned the sick woman again; "my dear lady, don't forget my poor little orphan. Our master is far away, but you" —

She stopped, so difficult was it for her to speak.

"Calm yourself," answered Alexandra Paulovna. "It shall be as you wish. I have brought you some sugar and tea. If you are thirsty, drink some. You have a samovar,[1] have you not?" she continued, looking at the old man.

[1] The Russian vessel for making tea. — TR.

"A samovar? No, we have no samovar; but we can get one."

"Well, you must get one; if you cannot, I'll send you one. Tell your granddaughter she ought not to be running away in this fashion. Tell her it's disgraceful."

The old man did not answer, but took the bundle of tea and sugar.

"Well, good by, Matrona!" said Alexandra; "I shall come again to see you. Don't be down-hearted, and take your medicine regularly."

The old woman raised her head a little, and moved towards Alexandra Paulovna. "Give me your hand, my dear lady," she murmured.

Alexandra Paulovna did not give her hand; she leaned over her and kissed her brow.

"Be very careful," she said to the old man, as she was passing out; "the medicine must be given her at the right time, and make her drink some tea."

He again bowed in silence.

Alexandra Paulovna breathed more freely when she

came out into the fresh air. She opened her sunshade and was about to return home, when suddenly there turned the corner of the cabin a man of about thirty years of age, driving a low droschke; he wore an old gray linen overcoat, and a cap of the same material. As soon as he saw Alexandra Paulovna he stopped his horse and turned towards her. His face was broad and pale, his eyes were small and light-gray in color, his moustache very blonde; his whole appearance was very like his dress in color.

"Good day," he said, with a careless smile; "what are you doing here, if I may take the liberty of asking?"

"I have been visiting a sick woman. But where do you come from, Michael Michaëlovitch?"

The man whose name was Michael Michaëlovitch looked her in the eye and smiled again.

"It is very good of you," he continued, "to visit a sick woman; but would it not be better to have her taken to a hospital?"

"She is too weak; she can't be moved."

"How is it about your hospital; don't you intend to have it closed?"

"Closed! why?"

"Well, I thought so."

"What a singular idea! How did it get into your head?"

"You have so much to do with Madame Lassounski, and, apparently, you are so much under her influence. According to her, hospitals and schools are all nonsense, useless inventions. Benevolence ought to be individual, and education too; all that is the work of the soul — I believe that is the way she expresses herself. I should like to know who teaches her to talk in that way."

Alexandra Paulovna laughed.

"Daria Michaëlovna is an intelligent woman. I like and respect her very much; but she can make mistakes, and I don't believe in every word she says."

"And it is well that you don't," answered Michael Michaëlovitch without getting out of his droschke; "for

she has no faith in her own words. I am very glad to have met you."

"Why so?"

"A nice question! as if it were not always pleasant to meet you. To-day you are as fresh and charming as the morning."

Alexandra Paulovna laughed again.

"What are you laughing at?"

"Ah! what at? If you could only see with what a cold, indifferent manner you utter your compliments! I am surprised that you get to the end of your sentence without yawning."

"With a cold manner you always want fire; but fire is good for nothing. It blazes up, smokes, and goes out."

"And warms," added Alexandra Paulovna.

"Yes, and burns, too."

"Well, what harm if it does? We must not complain on that account. That is better than" —

"I should like to hear what you would say if you had once burned yourself seriously!" answered Michael

Michaëlovitch, with some petulance, as he hit his horse with the reins. "Good-by!"

"Michael Michaëlovitch, wait a moment; when are you coming to see us?"

"To-morrow. Remember me to your brother."

And the droschke started off.

"What a singular man!" she thought, as she gazed after him. In fact, as he appeared, round-shouldered, covered with dust, his hair flowing in disorder from beneath his cap which was thrust on the back of his head, he looked, as she said to herself, like a real meal bag.

Slowly Alexandra Paulovna resumed her way home. She was walking with eyes cast down, when the steps of a horse in her immediate neighborhood caused her to stop and look up. It was her brother riding to meet her. By his side was walking a young man, of ordinary height, wearing a thin open overcoat, a narrow necktie, a light gray hat, and with a cane in his hand. From a distance he had been smiling at Alexandra Paulovna, although he saw very well that she was sunk in thought and heeding nothing

She did not notice him until he stepped up to her and said almost tenderly, —

"Good morning, Alexandra Paulovna, good morning!"

"Ah! Constantine Diomiditch, good morning! are you coming from Daria Michaëlovna's?"

"Exactly, exactly," cried the young man, with his face all lit up, "from Daria Michaëlovna's. She sent me to you; I preferred to come on foot. The morning is so pleasant! It is only about four versts. I went to the house — you were not at home. Your brother told me you had gone to Semenovka. He was just going out to ride to the meadows; so I came with him to meet you. Yes, indeed. How charming!"

The young man spoke Russian accurately and grammatically, but with a foreign accent which it would have been hard to define. In his features there was something Asiatic. The long curved nose, the large prominent eyes, the thick red lips, the retreating forehead, the jet black hair, — everything about him indicated an Oriental origin, yet his name was Pandalewski, and he said he was from

Odessa, although he had been brought up somewhere in White Russia at the expense of a benevolent and wealthy widow. Another widow had obtained for him a position in the government service. In general, women of a certain age took pleasure in helping him; he understood how to obtain from them what he wanted. At this very time he was living, either as an adopted son or as guest, at the house of a rich owner of a large estate, Daria Michaëlovna Lassounski. He was amiable to every one, obliging, full of feeling, and secretly sensual: he had an agreeable voice, played the piano tolerably well, and had a way of staring hard at the person with whom he was talking. His broad chin was carefully shaven, and his hair always combed smooth.

Alexandra Paulovna listened until the end of his speech, and then turned to her brother.

"I am meeting everybody to-day; I've just been talking with Leschnieff."

"Ah, indeed!"

"Yes, and only think, he was driving in a droschke in a

long linen overcoat, all covered with dust! What a strange man!"

"Possibly, but he's a capital fellow!"

"What! Mr. Leschnieff?" asked Constantine with surprise.

"Yes, Michael Michaëlovitch Leschnieff," answered Volinzoff; "but good-by, sister; I must go to the field: they have begun to sow the buckwheat. Mr. Pandalewski will escort you home."

And Volinzoff trotted away.

"With the greatest pleasure," cried Constantine, as he offered his arm to Alexandra Paulovna.

She took it, and they both took the path to the house.

II.

To walk arm in arm with Alexandra Paulovna evidently filled Constantine Diomiditch with joy and pride. He took short, mincing steps, he smiled complacently, and his Oriental eyes grew moist, as indeed they were in the habit of doing; it was always easy for him to be moved, even to the point of shedding tears. And who would not be happy to have a young and pretty woman on his arm? The whole district of —— agreed that Alexandra Paulovna was charming, and the whole district was right. Her straight nose, just the least bit turned up, would have alone turned the head of the wisest of mankind, not to speak of her brown velvety eyes, her golden hair, the dimples on her round cheeks, and her countless other charms. But the most attractive thing about her was the expression of her beautiful

face; confiding, kind, and modest, it moved and attracted every one. Alexandra had the look and laugh of a child the ladies of her acquaintance thought her a little simple. What more could one want?

"You say that Daria Michaëlovna sent you to me?" she asked Pandalewski.

"Yes, of course, of course she sent me," he answered in a strikingly affected way, and pronouncing the letter *s*, like the English *th*; "she told me to beg you to be kind enough to dine with her to-day; she is very anxious, for she expects a new guest whom she wants to introduce to you."

"Who is it?"

"One Muffel, a baron and a gentleman of the bedchamber, from St. Petersburg. Daria Michaëlovna met him recently at Prince Garine's, and she always speaks of him most enthusiastically, as a charming and highly cultivated young man. The baron is interested in literature, or rather — oh, what a beautiful butterfly; do look at it! — rather, in political economy. He has written an article on a very

interesting question, and is anxious to submit it to Daria Michaëlovna's judgment."

"An article on political economy?"

"With respect to the style, Alexandra Paulovna, with respect to the style. You must know Daria Michaëlovna is a great authority in such matters. Schukapski used to consult her, and my benefactor, the venerable Roxolan Mediarovitch Xandrina, who used to live in Odessa — you certainly remember his name?"

"Not at all; I never heard of him."

"You never heard of him? That is strange! I was going to say that Roxolan Mediarovitch also had a very high opinion of Daria Michaëlovna's knowledge of Russian."

"But isn't this baron a pedant?"

"Not at all; Daria Michaëlovna says that you can see at once that he is a man of the world. He spoke of Beethoven with such eloquence that even the old prince was touched. I must say I should like to have heard him, for that is in my line. May I offer you this wild flower?'

Alexandra Paulovna took the flower, but soon let it fall

from her hand. They were only about two hundred paces from the house; newly built and still all white, it smiled invitingly from behind a dense thicket of limes and maples.

"What answer do you give me for Daria Michaëlovna?" asked Constantine, a little piqued at the fate of his flower; "shall you come to dinner? She has also invited your brother."

"Yes, we will come without fail. How is Natalie?"

"Natalie Alexandrovna is well, I am happy to say. But we have passed the road to Daria Michaëlovna's. Allow me to bid you good morning."

Alexandra Paulovna remained standing. "You won't come in, then?" she said with some hesitation.

"I should be very happy to, but I am afraid I shall be late. Daria Michaëlovna wants to hear a new *fantaisie* of Thalberg's, and I must go practise it. Besides, I must confess I am afraid that you get very little pleasure from my conversation."

"Not at all — why?"

Constantine sighed and lowered his eyes meaningly.

"*Au revoir,* Alexandra Paulovna," he said, after a brief silence. He bowed and stepped back.

Alexandra Paulovna turned and started towards the house. Constantine went on his way. In a moment all his previous gentleness had left his face, to be followed by an expression of self-confidence, or even of hardness. His gait changed, his steps were longer and quicker. He had walked about two versts, swinging his cane in the air, when suddenly his smile reappeared as he saw near the road a young and tolerably pretty peasant girl, who was driving some calves out of an oat field. Constantine approached the girl as cautiously as a cat, and addressed her. At first she did not reply; she blushed, put her sleeve over her mouth, turned away, and then said: —

"Go away, sir; go away."

Constantine threatened her with his finger, and told her to bring him some corn-flowers.

"What do you want of corn-flowers? Are you going to weave a crown?" said the girl. "Now, go, really" —

"Listen, you charming beauty."

"No, no, go away," interrupted the girl; "see, there are the young gentlemen coming."

Constantine turned around. In fact, Vania and Petia, Daria Michaëlovna's two boys, were running along the road towards them. Behind them came their tutor, Bassistoff, a young man of twenty-two, who had just finished his studies. Bassistoff was tall, with a common face, a large nose, thick lips and little eyes; awkward, unattractive, but kind, honest, and straightforward. He dressed carelessly, and let his hair grow as it pleased, not from vanity but from laziness. He liked to eat and to sleep, but he also liked a good book, and an interesting talk; Pandalewski he detested from the bottom of his heart.

Daria Michaëlovna's children adored Bassistoff, and were not in the least afraid of him. He was on familiar terms with all the rest of the household, little to the pleasure of the lady of the house, although she always pretended to be superior to ordinary prejudices.

"Good day, children," said Constantine; "how early you are out this morning. As for me," he added, turn-

ing to Bassistoff, "I have already taken a long walk. I like to enjoy the beauty of these lovely mornings."

"We have just seen how you enjoy the beauty of nature," growled Bassistoff.

"You are a materialist, and Heaven knows what you fancy. I know you."

When Pandalewski was talking with Bassistoff or such people, he soon lost his temper, and his pronunciation became very distinct and often somewhat hissing.

"You were apparently asking the way of that girl," said Bassistoff, glancing nervously to each side. He felt Constantine's eyes fastened on him and he was uneasy.

"I repeat it, you are a materialist, and nothing else. You are willing to see only the prosaic side of everything."

"Children," suddenly cried Bassistoff, "do you see that willow in the field? We'll see who will get there first; one, two, three!"

And the children started off for the willow, Bassistoff after them.

"The clown!" thought Constantine; "he will ruin those boys — a regular country bumpkin!"

Then looking with considerable self-satisfaction at his wn neat figure, he patted twice the sleeve of his coat with his separated fingers, arranged his collar, and went on his way. When he reached his room, he put on an old dressing-gown, and sat down to the piano with an earnest face.

III.

Daria Michaëlovna Lassounski's house was perhaps the principal one in the province of ——. Very large, built of stone from designs of Rastelli, in the style of the last century, it stood majestically on the top of a hill at the foot of which flowed one of the principal rivers of Central Russia. Daria Michaëlovna was a lady of rank, rich, and the widow of a Privy Counsellor. Constantine used to say that she knew the whole of Europe, and that the whole of Europe knew her — but Europe had very slight acquaintance with her, and even at St. Petersburg she had no very prominent position; but, on the other hand, at Moscow every one knew and visited her. She belonged to the best society, and was considered very eccentric; not too amiable, but extremely clever. In her youth she had been

very pretty. Then poets had written verses to her, young men had fallen in love with her, and many eminent men had paid her attention. But twenty-five or thirty years had passed, and every trace of Daria's charms had disappeared.

"Is it possible," every one would say to himself as he first saw her, "is it possible that this thin, sallow, sharp-nosed woman, who is not yet old, should have ever been a beauty. Is it she who used to inspire poets?" And every one was amazed at the mutability of earthly things. It is true that Pandalewski used to say that Daria's eyes had preserved their wonderful charm, but then, he used to say that the whole of Europe knew her.

Every summer Daria Michaëlovna used to come to her place in the country, with her children (a girl of seventeen, and two boys of nine and ten), and keep open house; that is to say, she used to receive the men; the women, and especially the unmarried women, of the province she could not abide. In return she had to endure their backbiting. According to them Daria Michaëlovna was haughty and

tyrannical, but the main point was the shocking liberties she allowed herself in conversation. It is true that in the country Daria Michaëlovna liked to be free from conventional restraint, and that in her informal, easy manners one could readily detect a slight shade of a grand lady's contempt for the insignificant beings with whom she was thrown. Even her city acquaintances she treated unceremoniously or almost with ridicule, but without any trace of contempt.

Have you ever noticed, dear reader, that people who are very absent-minded in the company of their inferiors, suddenly lose that manner when they enter the society of their superiors? What can be the reason of this? But why ask such questions?

When Constantine Diomiditch had learned by heart Thalberg's *fantaisie*, he left his neatly arranged room to go down to the parlor, where he found the family assembled. The lady of the house was lying on a broad sofa, with her feet curled up beneath her, and a new French pamphlet in her hand. At one side of the window Daria's daughter

was seated before an embroidery frame; on the other sat Mademoiselle Boncourt, the governess, an old, withered maiden lady about sixty years of age, with a band of black hair beneath her colored cap, and cotton in her ears; in the corner near the door Bassistoff was sitting, reading the newspaper, while near him Petia and Vania, his pupils, were playing backgammon; leaning against the stove, with his hands behind him, was standing a man of medium height, with a thick mass of hair, a dark complexion, and little, restless, black eyes. His name was Africanus Simeonovitch Pigasoff.

Mr. Pigasoff was a strange man. Angry with everything and everybody, especially with women, he was making bitter remarks from morning till night; sometimes they were very acute, sometimes very flat, but he was always satisfied with them. He was as irritable as a child; his laugh, the sound of his voice, his whole being, seemed saturated with bitterness. Daria Michaëlovna was always glad to see him; his speeches amused her. And in fact they were very entertaining. He had a way of exaggerating everything

If any one, for example, were to speak in his presence of an accident, whether the lightning had set fire to some village, or a flood had washed away a mill, or some peasant had cut his hand with his axe, he never failed to ask with redoubled sourness, "And what was *her* name?" as if he wanted to know the name of the woman who was the cause of the misfortune; for, according to him, one need only go to the root of things to find that everything that goes wrong is the work of some woman.

One day he fell on his knees before a lady whom he hardly knew, but who had wearied him by urging him to taste some little delicacy, and began to beseech her humbly, but with wrath plainly to be seen in his face, to spare him; that he had nothing to reproach himself with in regard of his conduct to her, and that he would never visit her again. Another time a horse ran away with one of Daria Michaëlovna's washerwomen down a steep hill, and threw her into a pit, nearly killing her. From that time Pigasoff never spoke of it except as the "good horse," and the hill and pit began to seem to him most picturesque

places. In all his life Pigasoff had never known success; and this probably was one of the main reasons of his eccentric conduct. His parents had been poor. His father's occupation had been very humble; he scarcely knew how to read and write, and so had not thought about his son's education; he had given him food and clothing, — that was all. His mother, who used to spoil him, died young. Pigasoff owed his education to himself; he entered first the public school, then the gymnasium, learned French, German, and even Latin. Having left the gymnasium with excellent certificates, he went to Dorpat, where he kept up a steady struggle with misery, but pursued his studies for three years. Pigasoff's capacities were by no means extraordinary; he was distinguished for his patience and persistency; but his most marked trait was his ambition, his longing for good society, his yearning not to be inferior to others, notwithstanding his disadvantages. It was from ambition that he worked hard, and for the same reason that he had entered the University of Dorpat. His poverty galled him, and developed in him the habit of observation.

and a certain cunning. He had an original way of expressing himself, and from his youth he had adopted a singular sort of bitter, caustic eloquence. His thoughts were commonplace, but he talked in such a way that he seemed to be not merely a bright, but even an intelligent man. Towards the end of his studies Pigasoff made up his mind to devote himself to teaching, because it was the only career which would allow him to remain on a par with his companions, whom he chose especially from the higher classes, trying to please them, or even to flatter them, although he never ceased ridiculing them. But yet, to tell the truth, he lacked the requisite ability. Having educated himself, with no master and no real love of knowledge, he actually did not know enough. His thesis was a complete failure, while another student, his room-mate, at whom he had always been laughing, passed over him triumphantly. This defeat enraged Pigasoff extremely; he threw all his notes and books into the fire, and entered the government service.

At first he succeeded tolerably well; as an official he

cut a very good figure. He was not very exact, but self-confident and loud-talking. He only wished speedy promotion, but, unfortunately, he got into difficulties, was reprimanded, and in fact he was compelled to resign. He spent three years on an estate which he had bought, and suddenly he married a wealthy, uneducated woman who was fascinated by his easy, bantering manner. But Pigasoff grew only more cynical, and he soon became tired of domestic life. After living with him a few years, his wife fled secretly to Moscow, and sold to a crafty speculator her estate, on which Pigasoff had just made some improvements. Wounded to the quick by this last blow, he brought a suit against his wife, which he lost. So now he lived alone, visiting his neighbors, whom he laughed at to their face, and who received him with an affected good-humor, although they were never very much afraid of him. He never read a line. He owned about a hundred serfs; his peasants were never ill-treated.

"Ah, Constantine!" said Daria Michaëlovna, as Pandalewski entered the room: "is Alexandrina coming?"

"Alexandra Paulovna told me to thank you, and to tell you it would give her great pleasure to accept your invitation," answered Constantine Diomiditch, bowing right and left, and running his white, plump hand, with the nails cut to a point, through his carefully arranged hair.

"And is Volinzoff coming too?"

"Yes, he is coming."

"So then, Africanus Simeonovitch," continued Daria, turning towards Pigasoff, "you think all young women are affected?"

Pigasoff's lips contracted a little on one side, and his elbows twitched nervously.

"I say," he began deliberately — he always spoke slowly and distinctly when he was most malicious — "I say that young women in general — I of course do not include the present company" —

"That does not prevent you from doing so in your thoughts," interrupted Daria Michaëlovna.

"I pass them over in silence," answered Pigasoff. "In general, all girls are extremely affected in the expression

of their feelings. If a girl is frightened, for example, or delighted, or sorry, the first thing she does is to give a graceful bend to her body" (here Pigasoff twisted himself awkwardly, and extended his arms); "then she screams 'Ah!' or she bursts out laughing or crying. Once, however" (and here he burst out laughing), "I managed to get a genuine expression of emotion from a remarkably affected girl."

"How did that happen?"

Pigasoff's eyes lit up.

"From behind, I poked her in the side with a stake. How she shrieked! 'Bravo, bravo!' cried I. 'That was the voice of nature; that was a natural cry! You must keep to that in future.'"

They all burst out laughing.

"What nonsense you are talking, Africanus!" cried Daria Michaëlovna. "Do you think I will believe you poked a girl in the side with a stake?"

"It was a stake, upon my word! a very large stake, such as is used in the defence of a fort."

"*Mais c'est une horreur ce que vous dites là, Monsieur!*" cried Mademoiselle Boncourt, casting a serious glance at the boys, who were roaring with laughter.

"Don't believe him," said Daria; "don't you know him yet?"

The irritated French lady, however, could not at once control her anger, and she kept muttering between her teeth.

"You may believe me or not, as you please," continued Pigasoff calmly. "I assure you, however, that I have told only the exact truth. Who can know about it so well as I do? Then perhaps you will not believe that our neighbor Helen Tcheponzoff told me herself — mark my words, told me herself — that she had murdered her own nephew."

"Another of your inventions!"

"Excuse me, excuse me! Listen, and judge for yourself. Observe that I have no wish to malign her; I like her as much as one can like a woman. The almanac is the only book to be found in her house, and she can't read except aloud. Then, too, this exercise throws her into a perspira-

tion, and she says it makes her eyes feel as if they were going to drop out of her head. In a word, she is an excellent woman, and she does not starve her servants; why should I misrepresent her?"

"Come, come!" said Daria; "our Africanus Simeonovitch has got on his hobby. He'll not get off again before evening."

"My hobby! — women have three, from which they never get off, except perhaps when they are asleep."

"What are those three?"

"Recrimination, allusion, and reproach."

"But, Africanus Simeonovitch," said Daria, "you must have some reason for being so bitter against women. Some one must have" —

"Offended me, do you mean?" interrupted Pigasoff.

Daria was a little embarrassed; she remembered Pigasoff's unhappy marriage, and she simply nodded her head.

"It is true, a woman did offend me," continued Pigasoff. "And yet she was a good, a very good woman."

"Who was it?"

"My mother," answered Pigasoff in a lower tone.

"Your mother? How could she have given you offence?"

"By bringing me into the world."

Daria frowned. "It seems to me," she said, "that our conversation has taken a turn which is not very amusing. Constantine, play us that new *fantaisie* of Thalberg's. Perhaps the sound of music will pacify you, Africanus. Orpheus controlled the savage beasts."

Constantine seated himself at the piano and played the piece very well. Natalie at first listened attentively, but soon she resumed her work.

"*Merci; c'est charmant,*" said Daria; "I am very fond of Thalberg. *Il est si distingué.* What are you thinking about, Africanus?"

"I was thinking," said he slowly, "that there are three sorts of egoists: those who live themselves and let others live, those who live themselves and don't let others live, and finally those who neither live themselves nor let others live. Most women belong to the third class."

"How amiable! I am surprised at one thing, Africanus Simeonovitch, and that is your blind confidence in your own opinions, as if you could never be mistaken."

"By no means. I too can make mistakes; all men are liable to error. But do you know what the difference is between the mistakes of men and those of women? You don't know? I will tell you. A man may say, for example, that twice two makes, not four, but five; a woman will say that twice two makes — a wax-candle."

"It seems to me that I have heard that before. But allow me to ask you what connection there is between your thought about the three sorts of egoism and the music which we have just heard?"

"None at all; I did not even hear the music."

"Well, my friend, I see 'You are an incorrigible, I withdraw,'" answered Daria, altering a line of Griboiedoff. "What do you like then, if music has no charm for you? Possibly literature?"

"I like literature, but not that of the present day."

"Why not?"

"I will tell you. A short time ago I met a gentleman on the ferry over the Oka. On the other side we came to a steep shore; the carriage had to be taken out by hand. This gentleman's carriage was extremely heavy. While the boatmen were at work dragging it ashore, he remained on board the ferry-boat, groaning so that I almost pitied him. 'There,' said I, 'is a new application of the division of labor: this gentleman is like modern literature; others struggle and do the work, and it keeps up a groaning.'"

Daria Michaëlovna smiled.

"And that is what is called the literary production of our day," continued the indefatigable Pigasoff; "a profound sympathy for social questions, and Heaven knows what else — oh! I detest these high-sounding phrases!"

"But then, women, whom you are forever attacking, they at least do not use any high-sounding phrases."

Pigasoff shrugged his shoulders.

"If they don't use them, it is because they don't know how."

Daria Michaëlovna colored slightly.

"You are beginning to be impertinent, Africanus Simeonovitch!" she said, with a forced smile.

There was a moment of perfect stillness in the room.

"Where is Zolotonocha?" one of the boys suddenly asked Bassistoff.

"In the province of Poltara, my dear boy," answered Pigasoff, "in the centre of Little Russia." He was glad to give another turn to the conversation. "We were speaking about literature," he continued; "if I had any money to spare, I should become a Little Russian poet."

"That is something new; a fine poet you would make," answered Daria Michaëlovna; "do you know Little Russian?"

"Not at all; but that makes no difference."

"No difference, and why not?"

"It's very plain. You have only to take a sheet of paper, and write at the top 'Duma;'[1] then you string together a number of meaningless words, put in a few Little Russian interjections, such as 'Woropaie! hopp

[1] The name of the folksongs of Little Russia. — Tr.

hopp!' or something of that sort, and your poem is done. Then you send it to the printer. The Little Russian will read it, drop his head in his hands, and you may be sure he will weep. He has such a susceptible soul!"

"But for Heaven's sake," cried Bassistoff, "what are you talking about? It hasn't common sense. I have lived in Little Russia, and I know the language. 'Woropaie, hopp! hopp!' is perfect nonsense."

"Very likely, but the Little Russian will cry, all the same. You say their language: is there a Little Russian language? I once asked a Little Russian to translate a sentence for me, and how do you think he did it? He repeated the words just as I had pronounced them, except that everywhere he changed every *i* into a French *u*. Is that a separate language, or what is it? Before I'd agree to that, I would bray my best friend in a mortar."

Bassistoff was about to answer.

"Don't mind him," cried Daria; "you know he is always uttering paradoxes."

Pigasoff smiled maliciously. A servant entered to an nounce Alexandra Paulovna and her brother.

Daria arose to receive her guests.

"How are you, Alexandrina?" she said. "How kind of you to come. How are you, Sergius Paulovitch?"

Volinzoff pressed Daria's hand, and went towards Natalie.

"Well, and your new acquaintance, the baron, — is he going to come to-day?" asked Pigasoff.

"Yes, he is coming."

"He is said to be a great philosopher; he is spouting Hegel all the time."

Daria did not reply. She gave Alexandra a place on the sofa, and sat down by her side.

"Philosophy!" continued Pigasoff, "a lofty point of view! I am tired to death of this lofty point of view. And what can you see from such a lofty point? Does any one climb a tower to look at the house he is going to buy?"

"Is not the baron going to bring you an article?" asked Alexandra.

"Yes; an article," answered Daria with an affectation of indifference, "on the commercial and industrial relations of Russia. But don't be frightened; we are not going to read it now. It was not for that I invited you. *Le baron est aussi aimable que savant.* He speaks such good Russian! *C'est un vrai torrent . . . . il vous entraine!*"

"He speaks Russian so well," muttered Pigasoff, "that he has to be praised in French."

"Go on muttering, Africanus; it suits your bushy hair. But why doesn't he come? But why shouldn't we all go out into the garden? We have nearly an hour before dinner, and the day is lovely."

They all arose and went into the garden.

Daria's garden extended to the river. It contained many dark, odorous groves of old lime trees, with clumps of acacia and lilac in the green expanse.

Volinzoff, Natalie, and Mademoiselle Boncourt entered the thick shade. Volinzoff walked by the side of the young girl, but in silence.

"What have you been doing to-day?" Volinzoff at last asked, twirling his brown moustache.

He was very like his sister, though his face was less animated, and his soft, drooping eyes had a melancholy expression.

"Not much," answered Natalie. "I have been listening to Pigasoff's abuse, I did some embroidery, and I read."

"And what did you read?"

"I read — the History of the Crusades," said Natalie, with a little hesitation.

Volinzoff looked at her.

"Oh," he said, after a pause; "that must be interesting."

He plucked a twig from a tree and fanned himself with it. They walked some twenty paces further.

"Who is this baron whose acquaintance your mother has made?" asked Volinzoff again.

"He is a gentleman of the bedchamber. He has just arrived. Mamma thinks very highly of him."

"Your mother is very ready to follow her first impressions."

"A proof that her heart is still young."

"Of course. I shall soon send you your horse. He is almost entirely broken. I want to teach it to gallop, and I shall succeed."

"*Merci.* But really you embarrass me. You are breaking him yourself. They say that is very hard."

"You know, Natalie Alexievna, that to do you the slightest service, I am ready — I should — but not such trifles" —

He grew extremely confused.

Natalie glanced at him kindly, and thanked him again.

"You know," said Sergius Paulovitch, after a long pause, "there is nothing — but why say it? You understand me."

At that moment the bell rang.

"Ah, the dinner bell!" said Mademoiselle Boncourt; let us go in."

"*Quel dommage*," thought the old French lady to herself

as she went up the terrace steps behind Natalie and Volinzoff, "*quel dommage que ce charmant garçon ait si peu de ressources dan conversation,*" which may be translated, You are very nice, my dear fellow, but a trifle stupid.

The baron did not come to dinner. They waited half an hour for him. At table the conversation flagged. Sergius Paulovitch did nothing but look at Natalie, by whom he sat, and keep her glass always filled with water. Pandalewski tried in vain to entertain his neighbor, Alexandra Paulovna. He almost melted with sweetness, while she could hardly keep from yawning. Bassistoff rolled little bread-balls, and thought of nothing; even Pigasoff was silent, and Daria said to him that he was not in good humor on that day. He answered sullenly, "When am I in good humor? It is not my way;" and he added with a bitter smile, "be patient; I am only kvass, plain Russian kvass,[1] but your gentleman of the bedchamber" —

"Bravo!" cried Daria, "Pigasoff is actually growing jealous in anticipation!"

[1] A fermented drink very common in Russia. — Tr.

But Pigasoff did not answer; he merely looked down gloomily. Seven o'clock struck, and they all went back to the parlor.

"It seems he is not coming," said Daria Michaëlovna.

At that very moment there was heard the rolling of a carriage. A little tarantars entered the court-yard, and a few minutes later a servant came into the room, bringing to Daria Michaëlovna a letter on a silver salver. She read it through, and turning to the servant, asked him, "Where is the gentleman who brought the letter?"

"He is in the carriage. Shall I bring him in?"

"Yes; ask him to come in."

The servant went out.

"Isn't it vexatious! Only think," continued Daria Michaëlovna, "the baron has been ordered to return to St. Petersburg. He has sent me his article by his friend, a Mr. Roudine. The baron was going to introduce him himself — he speaks very highly of him. But how annoying it is. I hoped the baron would spend some time here.'

"Dimitri Nicolaïtch Roudine," announced the servant.

IV.

THERE entered the room a man about thirty-five years old, tall, but somewhat round-shouldered, with thick, curly hair, a dark complexion, and irregular but expressive and intelligent features. His eyes, dark blue in color, were bright, his nose broad and straight; his lips were cleanly cut. His clothes were not new, and they were a trifle small for him, as if he had grown since they had been bought.

He stepped quickly towards Daria Michaëlovna, made her a low bow, and said that he had long been anxious to have the honor of her acquaintance, and that his friend, the baron, regretted extremely that he had been prevented from coming to take leave of her.

Roudine's thin voice was not in keeping with either his height or his broad chest.

"Pray be seated. I am delighted to make your acquaintance," said Daria, and after she had introduced him to the assembled company she asked him if he lived in that part of the country, or whether he was merely a visitor.

"I live in the province of T——," answered Roudine, holding his hat on his knees; "I have been only a short time here. I came here on business, and I am now living in the town."

"With whom?"

"With the doctor. He is an old college friend of mine."

"Ah! at the doctor's. Every one speaks very highly of him. He is said to be a very skilful physician. Have you known the baron long?"

"I met him last winter at Moscow, and I have spent about a week with him."

"He is an extremely intelligent man."

"Yes, very intelligent."

Daria raised to her face her handkerchief, which was scented with cologne.

"Are you in the government-service?" she asked.

"Who? I?"

"Yes, you."

"No; I have resigned."

Then followed a short silence, after which the conversation became general.

"Allow me to ask you," began Pigasoff, turning towards Roudine, "whether you know the contents of the article which the baron has sent?"

"I do."

"It is about the commerce, or rather, the relations of manufactures to commerce in our country; that, I think, is what you were pleased to say, Daria Michaëlovna?"

"Yes, that is the subject," said Daria, raising her hand to her head.

"I am of course a very poor judge of such matters," continued Pigasoff, "but I must say that the very title of the article seems to me — how can I put it delicately? — very obscure and confused."

"How so?"

Pigasoff smiled, and glanced at Daria Michaëlovna.

"Does it seem clear to you?" he asked, turning his fox-like face towards Roudine.

"To me? Why, yes, of course."

"Indeed. Naturally you know better than I do."

"Does your head ache?" asked Alexandra Paulovna of Daria Michaëlovna.

"No, it's nothing — *c'est nerveux.*"

"Allow me to ask you," again began Pigasoff in a slightly nasal voice, "does your acquaintance, Baron Muffel — that is his name, I believe?"

"You are right."

"Does he occupy himself especially with political economy, or does he devote to this interesting study only the leisure hours which he takes from his worldly pleasures and his numerous occupations?"

Roudine looked at Pigasoff attentively.

"In this subject the baron is only a dilettante," he answered, blushing slightly, "but there is a great deal that is true and interesting in his article."

"I am unable to discuss that with you, for I am wholly ignorant of his work. But, may I ask you, is his article more concerned with general principles than with facts?"

"It contains facts, as well as theories which rest upon the facts."

"Indeed. In my opinion — if you will allow me, I may say a word; I spent three years at Dorpat — all these so-called general principles, these theories, and systems — excuse my frankness; I am a provincial, and am not accustomed to mince matters — are absolutely useless. They are all abstractions invented to deceive people. Give us facts, gentlemen, that is all we ask."

"Indeed," answered Roudine, "but ought not the meaning of the facts to be explained?"

"These universal theories!" continued Pigasoff, "I cannot endure these theories, points of view, and conclusions They all rest on so-called convictions. Every one talks of his convictions, asks others to respect them, to adopt them Oh!" and he shook his fist in the air. Pandalewski began to laugh.

"Very good," said Roudine; "so according to you there are no such things as convictions?"

"No, there are none."

"That is your conviction?"

"Yes."

"Well, how can you say then that there are none? You have just expressed one."

All who were in the room smiled and looked at one another.

"Just allow me" — began Pigasoff again.

But Daria Michaëlovna clapped her hands and cried, "Bravo, bravo! Pigasoff is beaten!" while she took Roudine's hat from his hands.

"Wait a moment before you express your joy; have a little patience," said Pigasoff peevishly. "It's not enough to make a joke with an air of settling the whole question. It must be disproved, refuted, — but we are forgetting the subject of our discussion."

"Excuse me, in your turn," began Roudine coolly. "The matter lies in a nutshell. You do not believe in the util-

ity of general theories; you have no belief in convictions."

"I don't believe in them — I don't believe in them. I don't believe in anything."

"Very good. You are a sceptic."

"I don't see the need of using such a high-sounding word. Still" —

"Don't interrupt!" cried Daria.

"The fight has begun," said Pandalewski to himself.

"That word expresses my meaning," continued Roudine. "You understand it, why should I not use it? You believe in nothing. Why, then, do you believe in facts?"

"Why? Oh, that's delightful. A fact is something familiar; every one knows what facts are. I judge of them from experience, by my own senses."

"But your senses may be deceived. Your senses tell you that the sun revolves around the earth, or — or perhaps you do not agree with Copernicus? Perhaps you do not believe in him?"

A smile lit up every face; the eyes of all were turned

towards Roudine. Every one thought, "He's an intelligent man."

"You turn everything to ridicule," said Pigasoff "That is very original, but it does not advance matters at all."

"There was, unfortunately, very little originality in what I have been saying," answered Roudine. "It is all perfectly trite, it has been said thousands of times. But that is not the question" —

"What is, then?" broke in Pigasoff rather impudently. It was his habit, when discussing any question, to begin by ridiculing his adversary; then he would grow brutal, and finally he would retire in sulky silence.

"The question is this," continued Roudine. "I confess I cannot listen without pain to the attacks of intelligent people on" —

"On systems," interrupted Pigasoff.

"Well, as you please, on systems. Why do you so especially dislike that word? Every system is based on a knowledge of the principles of life" —

"Yes, but how is one to know them, to discover them?"

"Allow me. Naturally they are not accessible to every one, and man is liable to mistake; but you will probably agree with me that Newton, for instance, discovered some of the fundamental laws of the universe. It is true that he was a man of genius, but the discoveries of a genius are great, just in proportion as they are accessible to everybody. This tendency to seek for general principles among particular phenomena is one of the main characteristics of the human mind, and our whole civilization"—

"So that is what you are coming to," again interrupted Pigasoff with a languid voice. "I am a practical man, and averse to confusing myself with this metaphysical hair-splitting."

"You are perfectly right. But yet you will notice that this desire to be merely a practical man, is, after all, a sort of system, a theory"—

"Civilization, you said," continued Pigasoff without listening to him. "You are trying to overcome us with that

word. What good is this boasted civilization to us? As for me, I would not give a farthing for it."

"But you are arguing very poorly, Africanus Simeonovitch," said Daria Michaëlovna, who at heart was much pleased with the calmness and unbroken politeness of her new guest. "*C'est un homme comme il faut*," she thought, looking kindly at Roudine. "I must make friends with him." These last words she said to herself in Russian.

"I shall not undertake the defence of civilization," continued Roudine, after a moment of silence. "It does not need my defence. You don't like it, — that's a matter of taste. Besides, the discussion would lead us too far. Only allow me to remind you of an old proverb: 'You are angry, Jupiter, therefore you are wrong.' I mean that all these attacks on systems, general theories, etc., are especially to be regretted, because in denying the systems one generally denies knowledge and science, and loses the confidence which they inspire; that is to say, confidence in one's self, in one's own power. But human beings need this confidence; their impressions alone can never satisfy

them. It is a sad thing for them to fear thought and not to believe in it. Scepticism only leads to sterility and weakness" —

"Those are mere words," muttered Pigasoff.

"Possibly; but permit me to remark that by saying, 'Those are mere words,' we often try to get rid of the necessity of saying anything more sensible than those same words."

"How so?" asked Pigasoff, knitting his brows.

"You understand what I mean," answered Roudine with an involuntary impatience, which he at once repressed; "I repeat it, if a man has no fixed principles in which he believes, if he has no firm ground on which to rest, how will he be able to give an account of the needs, the destiny, the future of his country? How can he know what he has himself to do, if" —

"I surrender at once," suddenly said Pigasoff, bowing and stepping to one side without looking at any one.

Roudine looked at him, smiled slightly, and was silent.

"Ah, he has taken to flight," began Daria Michaëlovna

"Don't let that disturb you, Dimitri — excuse me," she added with a pleasant smile, "what was your father's name?"

"Nicholas."

"Don't let that disturb you, Dimitri Nicolaïtch. We all see how the matter stands. He pretends he is unwilling to discuss any more with you; but the truth is, he feels that he is unable. But draw nearer, and let us talk."

Roudine brought his chair forward.

"How is it that we have never met before?" continued Daria Michaëlovna. "That surprises me. Have you read this book? *C'est De Tocqueville, vous savez.*"

Daria handed the French book to Roudine. He took it, turned over a few pages, and said, after laying it down on the table, that he had not read that volume of De Tocqueville, but that he had thought a great deal about the questions it treated. Conversation began at once. At first Roudine seemed to hesitate, as if he could not find words to express his thoughts, but gradually he became excited and eloquent. In a quarter of an hour his voice

alone was to be heard. They all collected around him. Pigasoff remained, however, in a corner near the fire-place. Roudine talked intelligently, with enthusiasm and good sense; he showed much knowledge and wide reading. No one had expected to find him in any way a remarkable man — he was so poorly dressed — they had never heard of him before. It seemed strange, even incomprehensible, to all, that so intelligent a man could appear so unexpectedly there in the country. So much the more did he surprise them; indeed, he can be said to have fascinated them all, beginning with Daria Michaëlovna. She was proud of her new acquaintance, and she was already meditating beforehand how she should introduce Roudine into society. In spite of her age there was a great deal of youthful, nay almost childish, enthusiasm in her first impressions. Alexandra Paulovna, to tell the truth, had understood but little of Roudine's conversation, but she was no less surprised and delighted. Her brother felt very much as she did. Pandalewski watched Daria, and grew jealous. Pigasoff said to himself, "For fifty rubles I could buy a nightin-

gale which would sing better." But the most vividly impressed were Bassistoff and Natalie. Bassistoff scarcely breathed; he sat the whole time with open mouth and staring eyes, listening as he had never listened before in his life. As for Natalie, her face was flushed, and her look, which was fastened on Roudine, had become darker and more glowing at the same time.

"What handsome eyes he has!" whispered Volinzoff to her.

"Yes, very handsome."

"But what a pity that his hands are so large and red."

Natalie made no reply.

Tea was brought in. The conversation became more general, but from the sudden silence of every one the moment that Roudine opened his lips, it was easy to judge of the impressions he had produced. It suddenly occurred to Daria Michaëlovna that she would draw Pigasoff out a little. She stepped up to him and whispered, "Why do you keep so quiet, and do nothing but smile so contemptuously? Try to attack him again." Then without await-

ing his answer, she made a sign with her hand to Roudine.

"There is one quality of his which you don't know," said she, pointing to Pigasoff; "he is a terrible misogynist: he is always attacking women. I wish you would try to convert him."

Without meaning it, Roudine looked at Pigasoff from head to foot; he was at least a head taller. This made Pigasoff extremely angry; his sallow face grew pale.

"Daria Michaëlovna is mistaken," he answered, with an uncertain voice. "I don't detest women especially, but the whole human race."

"What could have given you such a bad opinion of it?" asked Roudine.

Pigasoff looked him straight in the face.

"Probably the study of my own heart, in which I discover every day new worthlessness. I judge others by myself. I am perhaps unjust, and I am worse than the rest. But what would you have? The habit is formed."

"I understand you, and I sympathize with you," answered Roudine. "What noble soul has not felt the need of humility as it contemplated itself? But yet one should endeavor to escape from this sad condition."

"I am much obliged to you for the patent of nobility which you are kind enough to grant my soul," retorted Pigasoff, "but I don't lament my condition. It is not so bad; and even if I knew any escape, I'm not so sure that I should make use of it."

"But that is the same thing — excuse the expression — as preferring one's self-satisfaction to the desire of living and being in the truth."

"Precisely," cried Pigasoff; "self-satisfaction! I understand the word, and you, I hope, understand it, and everybody else. As for the truth — where is it?"

"I really must tell you, you are repeating yourself," said Daria Michaëlovna.

Pigasoff shrugged his shoulders. "I ask where is the truth? Even philosophers don't know. Kant says, 'This is it;' but Hegel replies, 'No, it's this.'"

"And do you know what Hegel says about it?" asked Roudine without raising his eyes.

"I repeat it," said Pigasoff with warmth, "I cannot understand what the truth is. In my opinion there is none in the world; that is to say, the word is there, but the thing does not exist."

"For shame!" cried Daria Michaëlovna. "You ought to be ashamed to talk in that way, you old sinner. There is no truth in the world! What use is there in living, then?"

"At any rate," answered Pigasoff with bitterness, "it would be easier for you to live without truth than without your cook Stephen, who makes such good soup. And tell me, please, what need have you of truth? It does not help one arrange one's ribbons."

"Such jesting is not answering," remarked Daria Michaëlovna, "especially when it descends to abuse."

"I don't know how it is with the truth, but to a great many people, listening to it is painful," muttered Pigasoff. withdrawing to his corner.

As for Roudine, he began to talk about self-love, and he spoke of it very intelligently. He proved that a man who lacked it was of no use, that this quality is the "lever of Archimedes," by means of which the world can be moved; but that, at the same time, he alone deserves the name of man who knows how to control his self-love, as a rider does his horse, and to sacrifice his individuality for the general good.

"Selfishness," he concluded, "is suicide. The selfish man withers like a lonely, barren tree; but a self-love which consists in a striving after perfection is the source of all greatness. Yes, man ought to shatter the obstinate egoism of his individuality, in order to be able to give free expression to himself."

"Can you lend me a lead-pencil?" said Pigasoff to Bassistoff.

"A pencil — what for?"

"To write down Mr. Roudine's last sentence. If I don't make a note of it I might forget it, and that would be a great pity. It ought to be preserved."

"There are some things which ought not to be laughed at and turned to ridicule," answered Bassistoff with some warmth, turning his back on Pigasoff.

Meanwhile Roudine had moved towards Natalie. She arose, while her face indicated her embarrassment. Volinzoff, who was sitting by her, arose too.

"Here is a piano," said Roudine; "do you play?"

"Yes," answered Natalie, "but there is Constantine Diomiditch, who plays much better than I do."

Pandalewski raised his head and smiled.

"You do yourself injustice, Natalie Alexievna. I really don't play any better than you."

"Do you know Schubert's 'Erlkönig'?" asked Roudine.

"Of course," answered Daria Michaëlovna. "Go to the piano, Constantine. Are you fond of music, Dimitri Nicolaïtch?"

Roudine merely bowed slightly, and ran his hand through his hair, as if he were ready to listen. Constantine began.

Natalie stood at the side of the piano, opposite Roudine,

whose face lit up at the first notes. His dark-blue eyes wandered here and there, occasionally resting for a moment on Natalie. Constantine stopped.

Roudine said nothing. He walked to the open window A mist, heavy with the rich fragrance of the flowers, hung like a veil over the garden. From the trees breathed a gentle, refreshing coolness. The stars sparkled slowly. Delicious was this summer night; calmness covered everything. Roudine gazed into the dark garden for a few moments and then turned round.

"To-night's music reminds me of my university days in Germany, our meetings, our serenades" —

"You have been in Germany?" asked Daria Michaëlovna.

"I studied a year at Heidelberg, and almost as long at Berlin."

"And you dressed like the students? I understand they have a peculiar costume."

"At Heidelberg I used to wear high boots and spurs, and a short embroidered coat. I also used to let my hair

grow down over my shoulders. In Berlin, the students dress like everybody else."

"Tell us something of your student life," said Alexandra Paulovna.

Roudine began his account. He did not have the gift of narration. His descriptions lacked color. He did not know how to make his hearers laugh. Soon he dropped the account of his adventures in foreign parts for general reflections on the aim of civilization and science, on universities and university life in general. He sketched a large picture with bold, broad outlines. All listened to him with eager attention. He spoke like a master, with an irresistible fascination, not always clearly — but this very vagueness lent a charm to his words.

The richness of his ideas prevented Roudine from expressing himself with exactness and accuracy. One image followed another; comparisons, now unusually bold, again remarkably apt, followed one another in generous profusion. There was none of the straining after effect of the professional talker, but genuine inspiration ani-

mated his wonderful flow of words. He never sought for expressions; his words flowed readily and obediently to his lips, and one would have said that every one of them came straight from his heart, still glowing with the fire of conviction. Roudine possessed to the highest degree what might be called the music of eloquence. He had the art, by touching certain chords of the heart, to make them all vibrate together. It may have been that one or another of his hearers did not perfectly understand him, but yet he felt his breast heaving, scales seemed to fall from his eyes, something seemed aglow before him in the distance.

Roudine's thoughts, all turned towards the future, lent his face the fire of youth. Standing by the window, not looking at any one, he spoke, inspired by the beauty of the night, the general attention and sympathy, as well as by the presence of the young women. Carried on by the warmth of his own emotion he rose to eloquence, nay, even to poetry. The very sound of his voice, sonorous and calm, doubled the charm. It seemed as if from his mouth there

spoke something higher, something which even he himself did not understand. . . . . Roudine was speaking of what lent an eternal meaning to the brief life of man.

"I remember," he said in closing, "an old Scandinavian legend. The king and his warriors were in a long, dark hall around a fire. It was night, and in the winter-time. Suddenly a little bird flew in at one door and out by another. The king said, 'That bird is like man on the face of the earth; he flies hither out of the darkness, and he flies back again into darkness, and he only stays for a moment in the light and warmth.' 'Sire,' answered the oldest of the warriors, 'the bird is not lost in the darkness; he will find his nest again.' Without doubt our life is brief; but everything great is done by men. The consciousness of being the instrument of higher powers must console for the absence of all other joys; in death itself man will find his life, his nest." Roudine stopped and lowered his eyes with involuntary emotion.

"*Vous êtes un poëte!*" said Daria Michaëlovna in an undertone.

All agreed with her in their hearts, except Pigasoff. Without awaiting the end of Roudine's long speech he had quietly taken his hat and gone away, whispering, as he left, to Pandalewski, who was standing by the door, —

"The sane people are too much for me. I am going to visit the lunatics."

But no one thought of detaining him, nor was his absence remarked.

The table was set for supper, and half an hour later the company separated. Daria Michaëlovna had persuaded Roudine to stay there all night. Alexandra Paulovna drove back with her brother. On their way home she uttered many exclamations, and expressed great surprise at Roudine's wonderful intelligence. Volinzoff agreed with her, but he said that he did not always express himself clearly; "that is to say, not so as to be convincing," he added, probably intending to explain his meaning; and his face darkened and his look grew more melancholy as it fixed itself on the opposite corner of the carriage.

"He's a clever fellow," said Pandalewski aloud, as he

unfastened his silk braces while undressing himself; then with a harsh glance at his servant, a little Cossack, he bade him leave the room. Bassistoff did not sleep all night; he did not even take off his clothes; until daybreak he sat writing a letter to one of his friends in Moscow.

Nor did Natalie close her eyes that night. Lying in her bed, with her head resting on her arm, she gazed into the darkness; her pulse beat as in a fever, and many a deep sigh escaped from her perturbed breast.

V.

On the next morning Roudine had hardly finished dressing before a servant came to his room with an invitation from Daria Michaëlovna to come to her boudoir and take a cup of tea. Roudine found her alone. She welcomed him very warmly, asked if he had slept well, and poured out his tea herself, put in the sugar, and offered him a cigarette; then she again expressed her surprise that she had never met him before. Roudine had seated himself at a little distance; but Daria Michaëlovna offered him an arm-chair near her sofa, and turning towards him, began to make inquiries about his relatives, his plans, and his projects.

Daria spoke lazily, and did not listen very attentively, but Roudine saw that she was trying to be polite to him

indeed, that she was even flattering him. It was not without purpose that she had arranged this morning interview, and that she had chosen a plain but becoming dress, *à la Madame Recamier.* However, she soon ceased asking him questions, and began to talk about herself, her youth, and the persons she had known. Roudine listened with interest; but — strange to say — no matter of whom Daria Michaëlovna spoke, she always introduced herself as the main figure, so that he soon learned what she had said to such or such an eminent person, or what influence she had had upon some eminent writer. Judging from Daria Michaëlovna's conversation, all the distinguished persons of the time had wished for nothing except to make her acquaintance and deserve her good-will. She spoke of them very simply, without especial enthusiasm, as of people who belonged to her, calling some of them very odd sticks, but stringing their names together like gems in a costly coronet about the name of Daria Michaëlovna.

Roudine listened, smoking his cigarette in silence; only now and then he interrupted with brief remarks the lady's

loquacity. Although he was naturally eloquent and fond of talking, he knew how to listen, and those who were not frightened by his fluency soon expressed themselves freely in his presence, so much kindness did he show in listening to what another might say. He was very good-natured, as those are apt to be who are accustomed to feel themselves superior to the company they are in. In a discussion, he rarely let his opponent have the last word; he overcame him with his eager, impassionate language. Daria Michaëlovna spoke Russian, and seemed proud of her familiarity with her mother-tongue, although she made use of a great many French words and expressions. She tried to employ simple and popular expressions, but not always with perfect success. Roudine was not overmuch offended by the jargon which poured from Daria Michaëlovna's mouth. At last she grew tired; she let her head fall on the sofa cushion and looked at Roudine.

"Now I understand," he began slowly, "I understand why you pass every summer in the country. You need repose, calmness; after the bustling life of the city you

have to rest. I am convinced that you have a keen feeling for the beauties of nature."

Daria glanced at him quickly.

"Nature? Oh, yes, — yes, of course; I do indeed love it, but you know, Dimitri Nicolaïtch, even in the country a little society is necessary. Here I hardly see any one. Pigasoff is the cleverest man here."

"The man who got so angry yesterday?" asked Roudine.

"Yes. In the country he is by no means to be despised — he's amusing at times."

"He has some intelligence,' answered Roudine, "but he's on a wrong path. I don't know whether you agree with me, Daria Michaëlovna, but, in my opinion, there is nothing to be said in defence of unlimited, complete negation. Deny everything and possibly you will be considered intelligent; that is a well-known device. Ignorant people will readily suppose that you are better than everything which you deny; but that is often false. In the first place, it is easy to spy out faults in everything, and then, if you are in the right, so much the worse for you. Your mind,

always disposed for negation alone, loses its power and withers away. While you flatter your self-love, you deprive yourself of the real pleasures of the mind. Life — the inner worth of life — eludes your superficial, soured observation, and at last you become a mere scold, the butt of every one. Only he who loves can criticise."

"*Voilà M. Pigasoff enterré*," said Daria Michaëlovna. "You have a wonderful power of describing people. Still, Pigasoff probably would not have understood you. He only loves himself."

"And he's always abusing himself in order to have an excuse for abusing others," said Roudine.

Daria Michaëlovna laughed.

"Yes, but, to pass from the sick man to the sound one, — what do you think of the baron?"

"Of the baron? He's an excellent man, with a good heart and much experience; but he has no character. All his life he will remain half a scholar, half a man of the world; that is to say, a dabbler, or more exactly, a mere cipher. It's a pity."

"That's precisely my opinion," answered Daria Michaëlovna; "I have read his article .... *entre nous* .... *cela a assez peu de fond.*"

"Who else do you see?" asked Roudine after a short silence.

Daria knocked off the ash of her cigarette with her little finger. "Hardly any one else. There's Alexandra Paulovna; she is very nice, but nothing more. Her brother is a very worthy man, *un parfait honnête homme.* Prince Garine, you know. Those are all. There are two or three other neighbors, but they can't be counted. Either they are forever putting on lofty airs and pretensions, or else they are alternately bashful and overbold. As for the women, you know I never see them. We have another neighbor who is said to be a very cultivated, even a very learned man, but he is very eccentric. Alexandrine knows him, and it seems is somewhat interested in him. You ought to have paid her some attention, Dimitri Nicolaïtch; she is a charming woman; she only needs to be developed a little; yes, she does need that."

"She is very attractive," remarked Roudine.

"She is a perfect child, Dimitri Nicolaïtch, as innocent as a child. She has been married, *mais c'est tout comme.* If I were a man I should fall in love with just such women."

"Really?"

"Without doubt; such women have at least freshness, and that can't be imitated."

"And can everything else be imitated?" asked Roudine with a laugh, which was seldom seen on his face. Whenever he laughed his face assumed a very strange expression which gave him the appearance of an old man; his eyes closed, his nose wrinkled. "And who is this eccentric of whom you were speaking, and in whom Madame Lipina is interested?" he asked.

"A certain Leschnieff — Michael Michaëlovitch; he has a place in the neighborhood."

Roudine started and raised his head.

"Leschnieff — Michael Michaëlovitch?" he asked; "is he a neighbor of yours?"

"Yes. Do you know him?"

Roudine did not answer at once.

"I used to know him — a long time ago. He is said to be rich?" he continued, playing with the fringe of his chair.

"He is rich, but he dresses horribly and drives about in a droschke, like an overseer. I have tried to get him here. He is said to be very clever. I am now arranging some business matters with him . . . . you know I manage my estate myself?"

Roudine bowed.

"Yes, I do it myself," continued Daria Michaëlovna. "I don't try any foreign improvements. I follow the Russian ways; and you see everything goes on very well," she added, pointing to the surrounding objects.

"I have always been convinced of the complete error of those who deny the existence of practical sense in women."

Daria Michaëlovna smiled pleasantly.

"You are very kind," she said, "but what was I going to say? What were we talking about? Oh, yes, about

Leschnieff. I have to talk with him about some surveying. I have often invited him to come and see me, and I expect him to-day ; but he never comes — he's so eccentric."

The curtain which hung before the door was raised and the steward entered. He was a tall, gray-haired, somewhat bald man, wearing a black dress-coat, a white necktie, and a white waistcoat.

"What do you want?" asked Daria Michaëlovna, and turning a little towards Roudine, she asked him in French, "Does he not look like Canning?"

"Michael Michaëlovitch Leschnieff has arrived," said the steward; "shall I bring him here?"

"Ah, heavens!" cried Daria Michaëlovna, "just as we were speaking of him. Invite him to this room"

The man left the boudoir.

"This singular man is come at last, and at an unfortunate time. He interrupts our conversation."

Roudine was about to leave, but Daria Michaëlovna made him stay.

"Where are you going? We can talk about this matter

in your presence, and besides I want to have you describe him to me as you have Pigasoff. When you speak, *vous gravez comme avec un burin.* Stay."

Roudine was apparently about to answer, but he thought a moment and said nothing.

Michael Michaëlovitch, whom the reader already knows, entered the room. He wore the same old coat, and held in his sun-burned hands the same old cap. He saluted Daria Michaëlovna quietly, and walked up to the table.

"You have at last been good enough to call, Mr. Leschnieff," said Daria Michaëlovna. "Pray be seated. I believe you know this gentleman," she added, pointing towards Roudine.

Leschnieff looked at Roudine, and smiled rather oddly.

"I know Mr. Roudine," he said with a slight bow.

"We were at the university together," remarked Roudine in a low voice, and casting down his eyes.

"And have met since," said Leschnieff, coldly.

Daria Michaëlovna looked at both with some surprise and offered Leschnieff a seat, which he took.

"You wanted to see me," he began, "about the surveys?"

"Yes, about the surveys, and also for the pleasure of making your acquaintance. We are neighbors and almost relatives."

"I am much obliged to you," answered Leschnieff. "As to the surveys, I have come to an agreement about them with your overseer; I consent to everything he proposes."

"I knew you would."

"But he told me we could not sign the papers until I had had an interview with you."

"Yes, that is my habit. May I ask you if it is true that all your serfs pay you rent?"

"It is true."

"And yet you interest yourself in the surveying? That is very commendable of you."

Leschnieff did not answer for a moment.

"You see I came for this interview."

Daria Michaëlovna smiled. "I see that you came. You

say that in such a strange way, I am sure that you did not want to come."

"I never go anywhere," answered Leschnieff, phlegmatically.

"Not anywhere? But you call on Alexandra Paulovna?"

"I am an old friend of her brother."

"Her brother! Still, I don't compel any one. But you will excuse me, Michael Michaëlovitch, I am older than you and may be permitted to find fault with you; how can you take any pleasure in leading so retired a life? Is it my house perhaps that you don't like? or perhaps you don't like me?"

"I don't know you, Daria Michaëlovna, and so how can I dislike you? Your house is very handsome; but I confess frankly I don't like to take the trouble. I have no suitable coat, no gloves; I don't belong to your set."

"By birth and education you do, Michael Michaëlovitch. *Vous êtes des nôtres.*"

"Let us leave birth and education out of the discussion, Daria Michaëlovna. That is not the point."

"Man ought to live with his kind, Michael Michaëlovitch. What pleasure have you in living like Diogenes in his tub?"

"In the first place, he was very comfortable there; and in the second, how do you know that I do not live among people?"

Daria Michaëlovna bit her lips.

"That is another matter. I have only to regret that I am not one of those whom you deem worthy of your acquaintance."

"It seems to me," broke in Roudine, "that Mr. Leschnieff carries to excess what in itself is a very praiseworthy feeling — the love of liberty."

Leschnieff made no answer; he simply looked at Roudine. There was a moment of silence.

"So," said Leschnieff, rising, "I may consider our business as settled, and may tell your overseer to bring over the papers for me to sign."

"You may . . . . although you are not at all amiable . . . I ought to refuse."

"But this survey will bring you more profit than it does me."

Daria Michaëlovna shrugged her shoulders. "And you won't stay and breakfast with us?"

"Thank you very much, I never eat any breakfast, and besides, I must go home."

Daria Michaëlovna arose. "I won't detain you any longer," she said, going towards the window; "I don't dare detain you."

Leschnieff bade them good morning.

"Good-by, Mr. Leschnieff. Excuse me for boring you."

"You have not bored me," he said, going out.

"What do you think of him?" asked Daria of Roudine. "I had heard that he was eccentric, but this exceeds everything."

"He suffers in the same way as Pigasoff," answered Roudine, "from a desire to appear original. One pretends to be a Mephistopheles, the other a cynic. In it all there is a great deal of egoism, a great deal of selfishness, little

truth, little love. In another way, it is a sort of calculation; one puts on a mask of indifference and idleness, to make others say, 'That man hides a great deal of ligh beneath a bushel!' But if you examine closely, there is no light there."

"*Et de deux!*" said Daria Michaëlovna. "You are a terrible man at defining character. No one escapes you."

"Do you think so?" said Roudine. "Still, to be just," he continued, "I ought not to say anything about Leschnieff. I loved him once, loved him as a friend. Afterwards, in consequence of some misunderstanding" —

"You quarrelled?"

"No, we had no quarrel; we separated, and, I think, separated forever."

"That's the reason, I noticed that you were ill at ease during his visit. . . . . I am much obliged to you for a pleasant morning. I have enjoyed it very much. But — everything in moderation! I give you leave of absence until breakfast-time; now I must attend to business. My secretary, you have seen him — Constantine is my secre-

tary — is probably waiting for me now. I commend him to you. He is a most worthy young man, very obliging, and enthusiastic about you. Good-by, then, dear Dimitri Nicolaïtch. How indebted I am to the baron for giving me the opportunity of making your acquaintance."

Daria Michaëlovna held out her hand to Roudine. He first shook it, then raised it to his lips, and went out intc the hall, and thence upon the terrace, where he met Natalie.

VI.

It was by no means unlikely that one would not at first be attracted by Daria's daughter, Natalie Alexievna. Thin and dark, she had not yet reached her full growth, and she did not hold herself perfectly straight. Her features, although rather marked for a girl of seventeen, were noble and regular. Especially beautiful was the clear, smooth forehead, which rose above her gently arching eyebrows. She spoke very little, but when any one was talking she listened and looked attentively, almost fixedly, at him, as if she was unwilling to let anything escape her. She would often sit motionless, sunk in thought, her arms hanging by her side; at such times her face expressed the profoundness of her abstraction. . . . . A hardly perceptible smile played about her lips and disappeared again; her

large dark eyes lifted themselves up slowly. "*Qu'avez-vous?*" Mademoiselle Boncourt used to ask, and then would begin to scold her, telling her it was not proper for a young lady to drop her head and be so absent-minded. But Natalie was not absent-minded; on the contrary, she studied earnestly, and was fond of reading and working. Her feelings were keen and deep, although she was reserved; in her childhood she had hardly ever cried; now she seldom even sighed, and only grew pale when anything troubled her. Her mother considered her a well-behaved, reasonable child, and used to call her in jest, *mon honnête homme de fille*, but she had no very high opinion of her intellectual powers.

"Fortunately, my Natalie is cold," she used to say. "She's not like me — so much the better! She will be happy." Daria Michaëlovna was mistaken. Besides, it is seldom that a mother fully understands her daughter.

Natalie loved Daria Michaëlovna, but she did not have perfect confidence in her.

"You have nothing to conceal from me," said her

mother to her one day, "but if you had, you would make a great mystery of it. You have your own little head."

Natalie looked at her mother and thought, "And why shouldn't I have my own head?"

When Roudine met her on the terrace, she was going into her room with Miss Boncourt to get her hat and walk in the garden. Her morning occupations were finished. She was no longer treated as a child; Miss Boncourt had long since ceased instructing her in mythology and geography, but she made her read every morning a chapter of history or of a book of travels, or some other instructive work. Daria Michaëlovna made the choice as if she were following some system; but in fact she gave Natalie everything which her French bookseller in St. Petersburg sent her, except naturally the novels of Alexandre Dumas, Fils & Co.; these she kept for herself. When Natalie was reading history Miss Boncourt scowled with great severity behind her glasses; the old French lady considered all history to be full of things which were only harmful tc

know, although her knowledge included only Cambyses in ancient times, and Louis XIV. and Napoleon, whom she hated, in modern history. But Natalie used to read books of which Miss Boncourt had never heard; she knew Pouchkine by heart.

Natalie blushed slightly as she met Roudine.

"Are you going to walk?" he asked.

"Yes; we are going into the garden."

"Will you let me go with you?"

Natalie looked at Miss Boncourt, who answered, "Certainly, sir; we should be glad to have you."

Roudine took his hat and followed them.

At first Natalie was a little embarrassed at walking by Roudine's side, but she soon recovered herself. He began to question her about her occupations and the pleasure she had in the country. She answered a little timidly, but without that uneasy self-consciousness which is sometimes mistaken for modesty.

"Do you never get tired of the country?" asked Roudine, glancing at her from the corner of his eye.

"How can one be tired of the country? I am delighted to be here. I am very happy here."

"You are happy! That's a great word. But it's natural enough; you are young."

Roudine pronounced this word in a strange way, as if both envy and pity moved him.

"Yes, youth!" he added. "The great aim of science is to give us by means of work what youth gives us gratuitously."

Natalie looked at Roudine attentively; she had not understood him.

"I have been talking most of the morning with your mother," he continued, "an extraordinary woman. I can understand why all our poets so valued her friendship. Do you too like poetry?" he added, after a moment of silence.

"He's examining me," thought Natalie, and she answered, "Yes, I like it very much."

"Poetry is the language of the gods. I too am fond of poetry. But not in verses alone do we find poetry; it is

everywhere; it is all around us. Look at the trees, the sky; from all sides stream forth life and beauty; where there is life and beauty, there is poetry. Let us sit down on this bench," he continued. "So; I don't know why, but it seems to me that when we are better acquainted we shall be" — and he looked with a smile into her eyes — "very good friends. What do you think about it?"

"He treats me like a child," thought Natalie again, and, uncertain what she ought to say, she asked him how long he intended to stay in the country.

"All summer, the autumn, and perhaps through the winter. You know I am not rich; besides, I'm beginning to get tired of the perpetual change of place. It is time for me to give myself a little rest."

Natalie looked at him with surprise.

"Do you really find that it is time for you to rest?" she asked timidly.

Roudine fixed his eyes upon her.

"What do you mean by that?"

"I meant to say," she answered with some embarrass

ment, "that others may seek rest, but that you . . . you ought to work and try to make yourself useful. Who will do it, if you do not?"

"I am much obliged to you for your flattering opinion," interrupted Roudine; "be useful — that is easily said," and he rubbed his hand over his face. "Useful!" he repeated. "If I could only know how I could be of use — if I only had confidence in my own powers, where could I find sincere and sympathetic souls?"

Roudine let his hand fall with so despondent an air and dropped his head so sadly that Natalie could not help asking if he were indeed the man who on the evening before had spoken with such enthusiasm and confidence.

"But no," he added, shaking his lion-like mane, "that is nonsense, and you are right. I thank you, Natalie Alexievna, I thank you heartily." Natalie did not know why he thanked her. "A word from you has reminded me of my duty, has shown me the way. . . . . Yes, I must work. If I have talents I must not bury them. I ought not to

waste my powers in empty, useless babble, in vain words." . . . .

And his words flowed as from a spring. He spoke admirably, enthusiastically, against cowardice and idleness, about the necessity of working. He reproached himself, proved to himself that to discuss in advance what one was going to do was as unwise as to prick with a pin fruit that was on the point of ripening; it was a mere waste of force in both cases. He declared that a noble thought never failed to awaken sympathy, that those alone were misunderstood who did not themselves know what they wanted, or who deserved their fate. He spoke for a long time, and concluded with thanking Natalie again, and, pressing her hand suddenly, he added, "You are a charming, noble being!"

This liberty astounded Miss Boncourt. In spite of the forty years she had spent in Russia, she understood Russian with great difficulty, and admired only the fluent ease of Roudine's remarks. In her eyes he was only a sort of virtuoso or artist, and such people could not be held to too strict a regard of conventionalities.

She rose, arranged her skirts, and told Natalie it was time to go back, especially because Mr. Volinzoff was going to breakfast with them.

"There he is now," she added, glancing at one of the paths which led towards the house.

And in fact, Volinzoff was coming towards them. He approached irresolutely, greeted all from a distance, and turning towards Natalie with suffering marked upon his face, he said to her, "Ah! you were taking your walk?"

"Yes," answered Natalie. "We were just going back to the house."

"Indeed; let us go."

And they all started towards the house.

"How is your sister?" asked Roudine with an especially courteous voice. On the evening before, too, he had treated him with great kindness.

"Thank you very much, she is very well. Perhaps she will come to-day I think you were talking when I came up!"

"Yes, we were talking. Natalie Alexievna had said something which made a great impression upon me."

Volinzoff did not ask what she had said, and in unbroken silence they all reached the house.

They met again in the parlor before dinner, but Pigasoff did not appear. Roudine seemed rather out of spirits, and he kept asking Pandalewski to play something of Beethoven. Volinzoff said nothing, and kept his eyes fastened on the ground. Natalie did not stir from her mother's side; at one moment she was lost in thought, and the next she was busy with her work. Bassistoff simply stared at Roudine, waiting for him to utter one of his intelligent remarks. Three hours passed thus uneventfully. Alexandra Paulovna did not come to dinner, and as soon as the meal was finished, Volinzoff had his carriage brought to the door, and he drove away without taking leave of any one.

He felt very ill at ease. For a long time he had been in love with Natalie, but he had never ventured to confess his passion, and this state of uncertainty was the cause of

great suffering to him. She was always glad to see him, but her heart was calm; he never deceived himself with respect to the emotion he excited. He had never hoped to arouse a tenderer feeling, and only waited for the time to come when she would be thoroughly accustomed to him and would consent to accept him. But what could have so disturbed Volinzoff to-day? What change had he noticed in this short time? Natalie had treated him as she always did.

Was it the sudden thought that perhaps he did not understand Natalie's character, and that she was not so near him as he had imagined? Was he jealous? Had he a presentiment of some misfortune? . . . . At any rate he suffered, in spite of all his attempts to control himself.

On reaching his sister's house he found Leschnieff there.

"What made you come back so early?" asked Alexandra Paulovna.

"I don't know; I was bored."

"Was Roudine there?"

"He was."

Volinzoff threw his cap to one side, and sat down.

Alexandra Paulovna turned towards him quickly.

"Please, Sergius, help me to convince this obstinate man," pointing to Leschnieff, "that Roudine is uncommonly intelligent and really eloquent."

Volinzoff muttered a few unintelligible words.

"I don't contradict you in the least," began Leschnieff. "I don't deny his intelligence and eloquence, I only say I don't like him."

"Have you ever seen him?" asked Volinzoff.

"I saw him this morning at Daria Michaëlovna's," answered Leschnieff. "He is now the Great Mogul there. The time will come when they will quarrel. Pandalewski is the only person whom she will never abandon; but now Roudine has it all his own way. Yes, indeed, I saw him. He was sitting there, and she showed me to him as if she was saying, 'There, my friend, see what queer fellows we have about here!' I'm not a piece of fancy stock, to be trotted out before visitors; so, I left at once."

"And what had you gone for?"

"About some surveying; but that was a mere pretence, she only wanted to see me. A fine lady . . . . we know all about that."

"Roudine's superiority is what offends you," said Alexandra Paulovna warmly; "that is what you can't forgive. But I am sure that his heart is as good as his head. Only look at his eyes when he" —

"Speaks of lofty virtue," said Leschnieff, quoting a line of Griboiedoff.

"You will make me angry, and then I shall cry. I am really sorry I stayed here with you and did not go to Daria's. You don't deserve such kindness. Now don't tease me any more," she added plaintively. "Tell me something about his youth."

"Of Roudine's youth?"

"Yes; why not? You told me, you remember, that you had known him for a long time, and very well."

Leschnieff arose and began to walk up and down the room.

"Yes," he began, "I know him well. You want me to tell you about his early life? Very well. He was born in T——. His father was a poor man who had an estate there. He died young and left this only child to his mother's care. She was an excellent woman and devoted to her son. She half starved herself that he might not lack money. He was educated at Moscow. At first it was one of his uncles who paid his expenses; afterwards, when Roudine had grown up and put on all his fine feathers, — excuse me, I won't do so any more, — it was a rich prince whose acquaintance he had made. Then he went to the university. It was there I knew him, and very intimately, too. Of our life then I will tell you at some other time. It is of no importance now. Then he travelled."

Leschnieff kept walking up and down the room; Alexandra following him with her eyes.

"Once gone," he continued, "Roudine seldom wrote to his mother. He only went to see her once, and then for but two days. It was among strangers that the poor woman died, but to the last she kept her eyes fastened on

his portrait. When I lived in T—— I used to go to see her. She was a kind old lady, and very hospitable; she never failed to give me preserved cherries. She was entirely devoted to her son. The gentlemen of the Petchorine[1] school will tell you that we are always inclined to love most those who are least capable of feeling any love for others; but it seems to me that all mothers love their children, especially when they are away from them. Some time afterwards I met Roudine again, abroad. He was living with one of our Russian ladies who had interested herself in him; she was a sort of blue-stocking, neither younger nor handsomer than blue-stockings should be. He wandered about for some time with her, and finally left her — no, excuse me, she grew tired of him. Then I lost all trace of him. That is all."

Leschnieff stopped, passed his hand over his face, and sat down in an arm-chair as if he were fatigued.

"But do you know, Michael Michaëlovitch," said Alexandra Paulovna, "that you are very bad? I am really

[1] The name of the hero of a novel of Lermontoff. — TR.

beginning to think that you are no better than Pigasoff. I am convinced that all you say is true, that you have not added anything, and yet in what an unfavorable light you have put everything! His poor old mother, her devotion to him, her lonely death, that lady . . . . what is the need of all that? Don't you know that one might paint the lives of even the best of men in such colors — and that, too, you will observe, without adding anything — that every one will be frightened? It is a sort of backbiting."

Leschnieff arose and began to walk up and down the room again.

"I certainly did not intend to deceive you," he said finally. "I am no backbiter. To be sure," he added, after a brief pause, "there is a certain amount of truth in what you say. I have not treated Roudine too severely; but — who knows? — he may have changed since then; perhaps I have not been fair towards him."

"Then promise me to renew your acquaintance with him, to study him thoroughly, and then to give me your final judgment of him."

"Very well, if you wish it. . . . . But why are you so silent, Sergius Paulovitch?"

Volinzoff started, and raised his head as if he had been suddenly awakened from sleep.

"What can I say? I don't know him. Besides, I don't feel very well to-day."

"You do look a little pale," said Alexandra Paulovna.

"I have a headache," said Volinzoff, as he left the room.

Alexandra Paulovna and Leschnieff gazed after him, and their eyes met without their saying a word. What was going on in Volinzoff's heart was a secret to neither of them.

VII.

More than two months had passed, during which time Roudine had hardly been out of Daria's house. She could not be without him. It had become a fixed habit with her to talk to him and listen to his conversation. Once he wanted to go away on the pretext that he had spent all his money, but she gave him five hundred rubles, which did not prevent him from borrowing one hundred from Volinzoff. Pigasoff visited Daria Michaëlovna much less often than before. Roudine's presence made the house distasteful to him, and he was not the only one who had this feeling.

"I don't like that conceited fellow," he used to say; "he's as affected in his way of speaking as the hero of a Russian novel. He begins with an 'I,' and then he stops

to admire it. 'I, well, I!' and he's so long-winded. If any one sneezes, he begins to explain why he sneezed instead of coughing. If he praises any one, it's as if he were raising him in the social scale. On the other hand, if he begins to decry himself, he drags himself in the mire, so that you would think he'd never dare show his face again. Not at all; it only puts him in better spirits, as if he'd taken a glass of absinthe."

As for Pandalewski, he was rather afraid of Roudine, and treated him with great obsequiousness. Volinzoff found himself in a singular relation to the new-comer. Roudine used to call him a knight, and was unceasing in his praise, whether in his presence or not; but his warmest compliments only filled Volinzoff with impatience and vexation. "He is making fun of me," he used to say to himself, with a sudden feeling of hatred. In spite of all his efforts to control himself, Volinzoff was jealous of him. And Roudine, although he was so loud in his praises, and called him a knight while he borrowed money from him, was hardly more drawn towards him. It would

not have been an easy matter to define the feelings of these two men when they shook hands warmly with one another and their eyes met.

Bassistoff continued to worship Roudine, and to listen greedily to every one of his words. But Roudine paid him very little attention. Once he spent the whole morning with him, talking on the most serious subjects, and aroused in him the warmest enthusiasm; after that he gave him no more consideration.

It was merely idle words, when he expressed his longing for young and ardent souls. Leschnieff had begun to visit Daria Michaëlovna, but Roudine never entered into discussion with him, and seemed to avoid him. Leschnieff, too, on his side, treated him with coolness, and never expressed any final judgment about him, much to the annoyance of Alexandra Paulovna. She bowed down before Roudine, but she had confidence in Leschnieff. All in Daria Michaëlovna's house humored Roudine's whims, and obeyed his slightest wishes. He settled what was to be done every day. There could be no picnic

without his approbation. All these sudden, improvised excursions were very little to his taste, and he took part in them with very much the same air of indifference and willingness to be pleased, that one shows who joins in the sports of children. To compensate for that, he took an interest in everything, discussed with Daria the management of the estate, the education of the young, and all sorts of business matters. He listened to all her plans without any contempt for the details, and proposed changes and improvements.

Daria was always charmed with what he said, but it never had any practical result. In all matters connected with the house she used to follow the advice of her overseer, a short, one-eyed old man, who was as crafty as he was soft-mannered. "What is old is fat; what is new is thin," he used to say, smiling wisely and winking.

After Daria, there was no one with whom Roudine used to talk so often nor so long as with Natalie. He lent her books without any one knowing of it, confided to her his plans, and read her the first pages of future articles and

books. Very often she did not fully understand them, but Roudine did not seem to trouble himself much about that, as long as he had some one to listen to him. His intimacy with Natalie was not perfectly agreeable to Daria, but she said to herself, "Let them chat together here in the country; he's fond of her as of any little girl. There's no harm in it; and he will teach her a great deal. But at St. Petersburg I will arrange everything on a different footing."

Daria was mistaken. Roudine did not talk to Natalie as one generally talks to a little girl. She too listened keenly to everything he said, tried to catch his meaning, submitted to his judgment all her thoughts and doubts; he was her instructor, her guide. At first it was only her head that was in a turmoil, but a young head is never long in a turmoil before the heart too is affected. How delicious to Natalie were those moments, when, as often happened, they were sitting on the garden-bench, in the light, transparent shadow of an ash-tree, and Roudine would read aloud Goethe's "Faust," Hoffman, Bettina's Letters, or Novalis, continually stopping to explain to her

whatever she found obscure! Like most Russian girls she did not speak German well, but she understood it without difficulty. As for Roudine, he was familiar with the whole romantic and philosophical world of Germany, and he carried Natalie with him into this ideal world. It was an unknown and marvellous world that was unfolded before the eager gaze of the young girl. From the pages of the book in Roudine's hand there streamed wonderful images, grand and touching, thoughts new and lofty, which filled Natalie's soul as with strains of enchanted music, while the holy fire of enthusiasm burned in her troubled heart. . . . .

"Tell me, Dimitri Nicolaitch," she said one day as she was sitting over her embroidery by the window, "are you going to St. Petersburg this winter?"

"I don't know," answered Roudine, letting a book he had been running over, fall into his lap; "if I can get the means I shall go."

He spoke languidly; all the morning he had seemed tired and dejected.

"I think you will find the means."

Roudine shook his head.

"Do you think so?" and he glanced at her from one side, with a look full of meaning.

Natalie was about to answer, but she stopped.

"See," began Roudine, pointing towards the window, "do you see that apple-tree? It is broken down by the abundance of the fruit. A true picture of genius."

"It is broken because it had no support," answered Natalie.

"I understand you, Natalie; but it is not so easy for man to find this support."

"I should think the sympathy of others . . . . but isolation at any rate" . . . . Natalie became embarrassed, and blushed. "And what are you going to do in the country this winter?" she added quickly.

"What am I going to do? I shall finish my long article — you know — on tragedy in life and in art. I told you my design day before yesterday; I will send it to you."

"And shall you have it printed?"

"No."

"But why not? For whom then do you do this work?'

"What if it were for you?"

Natalie lowered her eyes.

"It would be far above me, Dimitri Nicolaïtch."

"May I ask the subject of the article?" asked Bassistoff modestly. He was sitting at a little distance from them.

"On tragedy in life and in art," answered Roudine. "And Mr. Bassistoff will read it too. Then I have not yet quite made up my mind about the fundamental idea. Hitherto I have not given enough attention to the tragic import of love."

Love was a favorite and frequent subject of Roudine's conversation. At first Miss Boncourt used to start and prick up her ears at the mention of the word, like an old war-horse at the sound of a trumpet; but gradually she had grown used to it, and now she merely pursed her lips and took a pinch of snuff at intervals, whenever she heard the word.

"It seems to me," said Natalie modestly, "that the tragedy of love is simply unrequited love."

"Not at all," answered Roudine, "that is rather the comic side of love; one must look at the question in an entirely different way — go into it more profoundly. Love," he continued, "everything about it is a mystery; the way it appears, grows, vanishes. At one time it starts forth suddenly, unmistakably, joyous as the day; another time it smoulders a long time, like fire beneath the ashes, and bursts out in the soul when everything is destroyed; again it creeps into the heart like a serpent, to disappear as soon. . . . . Yes, yes, it is a great question. And who is there who loves nowadays? Who knows how to love?"

Roudine grew thoughtful.

"Why have we not seen Sergius Paulovitch for so long a time?" he asked suddenly.

Natalie blushed deeply, and lowered her head over her work.

"I don't know," she answered in a low voice.

"What a noble, excellent man!" said Roudine, rising. "He is one of the best types of the Russian gentleman."

Miss Boncourt looked at him from one side with her little French eyes.

Roudine began to walk up and down the room.

"Have you ever noticed," he asked, turning suddenly upon his heels, "that the oak — and the oak is a strong tree — only loses its old leaves when the new leaves begin to burst forth?"

"Yes," answered Natalie, "I have noticed it."

"It is the same way with old love in a strong heart. It is already dead, and yet it survives itself; and only a new love can drive it away."

Natalie did not answer.

"What does he mean?" she thought.

Roudine stood for a moment without moving, shook his hair, and went out.

Natalie went to her own room, where she remained for some time sitting on her bed, buried in thought. For a long time she thought over those last words of Roudine,

then suddenly she clasped her hands and burst into tears. Why she wept — God alone knows! She herself did not know why her tears burst forth so suddenly. She dried them, but again they fell, like water from a long confined spring.

On this very day, Alexandra had had a long talk with Leschnieff about Roudine. At first Leschnieff tried to maintain a stolid silence, but she was determined to get some definite information from him.

"I see," she said, "you still dislike Roudine as much as ever. Until to-day I have refrained from asking you; but now, you must have made up your mind as to whether there is any change in him, and I should like to know why he does not please you."

"Very well," answered Leschnieff, with his usual calmness, "if you are really so impatient; but remember, you must not get angry" —

"Well, well; begin, begin."

"And you must let me go on till I have finished."

"Of course; do begin."

"I will tell you," began Leschnieff, slowly sinking into an easy-chair. "It is true that I told you I did not like Roudine. He is an intelligent man."

"That can't be denied."

"He is a remarkably intelligent man, in spite of his shallowness" —

"That is easily said."

"In spite of his shallowness," repeated Leschnieff. "But that is not the point; we all have more or less of that. I don't reproach him for having a tyrannical nature for his idleness, nor because his knowledge is scrappy" —

Alexandra clasped her hands.

"Roudine's knowledge scrappy!" she exclaimed.

"Scrappy," repeated Leschnieff in the same tone. "He likes to live at others' expense, to be always playing a part, — to humbug people, in a word. All that is in the nature of things. But a worse thing is, that he is as cold as ice."

"He cold!" interrupted Alexandra.

"Yes, cold as ice; he knows it, and is always trying to

simulate passion. It is bad," continued Leschnieff, gradually growing excited, "because the part he is playing is very dangerous; not for him, for he risks neither his fortune nor his life, — but for others who risk their souls."

"Of whom are you talking? I don't understand you," said Alexandra Paulovna.

"I charge him with a lack of honesty. He is an intelligent man, and must know the value of his words; and yet he utters them as if they came from the bottom of his heart. He is eloquent — I don't deny that; but he has not the eloquence of a Russian. Besides, if one excuses fine talking in a young man, is it not a shame for a man of Roudine's age to take pleasure in the sound of his own voice? It is shameful to be playing such a comedy."

"It seems to me, Michael Michaëlovitch, that for those who are listening to him it makes very little difference whether he is playing a part or not."

"I beg your pardon, Alexandra Paulovna, there is a very great difference. One person will utter a word and I am thrilled by it; some one else will say the same thing or

something even more eloquent, and I don't even prick up my ears. What is the reason of that?"

"*You* won't prick up your ears, but how about other people?" asked Alexandra.

"Possibly," answered Leschnieff, "although my ears are long, you mean. But the fact is, that Roudine's words are merely words, and they will never become deeds; but that does not prevent his words from troubling and destroying the happiness of a young heart."

"But of whom are you speaking, Michael Michaël ovitch?"

Leschnieff hesitated.

"You want to know whom I mean? Natalie Alexievna."

For a moment Alexandra was confused, but in a moment she began to smile.

"Dear me!" she said, "what singular ideas you have! Natalie is a mere child, and then besides, isn't her mother there?"

"Daria is more than anything an egoist, who only lives for herself. Besides, she has such perfect confidence in

the education she gives her children, that it would never enter her head to be anxious about her daughter. How could she? One sign, a majestic glance, and all would set itself straight again. That's what this woman thinks, who imagines herself a Mæcenas, a remarkable person, and Heaven knows what else; and who really is nothing but a silly woman of the world. Natalie is no child, you may be sure; she reflects more frequently and profoundly over all sorts of matters than you and I together. And such a sincere and warm-hearted character must run against this actor, this frivolous fellow! But that is the way of the world."

"Frivolous! Do you call him frivolous?"

"Of course. But I ask you frankly, Alexandra Paulovna, what sort of a position does he have at Daria Michaëlovna's? To be the idol, the oracle of the house, to busy himself with all the petty household details, to listen to all the miserable gossip and chatter — is that worthy of a man?"

Alexandra looked at Leschnieff with amazement.

"I hardly recognize you, Michael Michaëlovitch," she said. "Your face is on fire, you are excited. I am sure that behind all this there is some secret which you are keeping hidden."

"Exactly. I ought to have expected such a suspicion. Tell a woman anything honestly and without reserve, and she will have no peace until she has cooked up some petty and foreign motive that explains why you expressed yourself in just that way and no other."

Alexandra Paulovna began to be annoyed.

"Bravo, Mr. Leschnieff! you treat women almost as well as Mr. Pigasoff himself; still, with all respect, however keen your eyes may be, I find it hard to believe that in so short a time you have been able to see through so many things, and to get so complete a knowledge of people. I think you are mistaken. According to you, Roudine is a sort of Tartuffe?"

"Not even as much as that. Tartuffe knew at least what he wanted to do, while our friend, with all his intelligence" —

Leschnieff stopped.

"What were you going to say? Finish your sentence, you unjust, harsh man."

Leschnieff arose.

"Listen to me, Alexandra Paulovna," he began; "it is you who are unjust, not I. You are angry at my harsh judgment of Roudine, but I have a right to judge him harshly. Perhaps, too, I have acquired this right at rather a high price. I know him well; I once lived with him a long time. You will remember I promised to tell you, sometime, about our life at Moscow. Apparently, I must do it now. But will you have the patience to hear me to the end?"

"Go on, go on!"

Leschnieff began to walk slowly up and down the room; from time to time he stopped and bowed his head.

"Perhaps you know," he began, "that I was left an orphan very young, and that at sixteen I knew no other authority than my own. I lived with an aunt of mine at Moscow, and did whatever I pleased. I was a tolerably

empty-headed, conceited young fellow, and I liked to make myself heard. When I entered the university I acted like a genuine student, and soon found myself implicated in a very disagreeable affair. I won't describe it; it is not worth while. It is enough to say that I had to lie about it, and in a very unpleasant way. The whole story came out, and I was overwhelmed with shame. I lost my head and cried like a child. This incident took place at the rooms of one of my acquaintances, and in the presence of a great number of my comrades. They all made fun of me, with the exception of one, who, please observe, had been severer than the others so long as I had been obstinate and had refused to confess my lie. I don't know whether he had pity on me, but he took my arm and led me away to his room."

"That was Roudine?" asked Alexandra Paulovna.

"No, it was not Roudine; it was a man — he is now dead — a rather remarkable man. His name was Pokorsky. I can't describe him in a few words, and if I begin to talk about him I shall not be able to speak of anything else. He had a pure, lofty character, and an intellect such as I

have not seen since. Pokorsky lived in a little, low room in an old, wooden house. He was very poor, and supported himself as well as he could by giving lessons. He could not even afford to give his visitors a cup of tea of an evening, and his only sofa was so worn out by long use that it looked not unlike a boat. But in spite of the lack of comforts, he always had a great many visitors. Every one liked him; he charmed every one. You can't imagine how pleasant it was to visit him in his little room. It was then that I made Roudine's acquaintance. He had already left his prince."

"What was there so remarkable about Pokorsky?"

"How can I tell you? Poetry and truth, they drew every one to him. With his clear, broad mind he was as amiable and amusing as a child. I can still hear his joyous laugh, and besides, 'He glowed for what was good as quietly and steadily as the lamp before the images of the saints,' as a half-mad poet, one of our set, but a very good fellow, said about him."

"And how did he talk?" again asked Alexandra Paulovna.

"He talked well when the inspiration seized him, but not surpassingly so. Even then Roudine was twenty times as eloquent as he."

Leschnieff stopped and folded his arms, then he went on.

"Pokorsky and Roudine were not at all alike. Roudine had much more brilliancy and show, an easier flow of words, and, if you wish it, more enthusiasm. He seemed to have more talent than Pokorsky, but, in fact, in comparison with him, he was a very poor fellow. Roudine would talk admirably about the first idea that came into his head, and he argued with wonderful brilliancy, but his ideas never came from his own head; he took them from everybody, and particularly from Pokorsky. Judging from appearances, Pokorsky was phlegmatic, unenergetic, even weak. He was fond of women, he never refused a glass of wine, but he would never have taken an insult from any one. Roudine appeared full of fire, boldness, and life, but at bottom he was cold and almost a coward, so long as his self-love was not touched; if it were, he'd have gone

through fire and water. He was always trying to rule others; he overcame them with his high-sounding phrases about universal principles and ideas, and he really exercised a great influence on very many of us. It is true, that no one liked him; I was perhaps the only one who had drawn closely to him. His yoke was endured — but all bowed willingly before Pokorsky. Roudine never lost an opportunity to discuss and argue with any one. He had not read a great deal, yet much more than Pokorsky and the rest of us, and besides, he had a methodical mind and an excellent memory; and all this never failed of its influence on young men. They must have results, conclusions, even if they be inaccurate. A thoroughly conscientious man is of no weight in their eyes. Try to tell young men that you cannot impart them perfect truth, because you have not found it yourself — they won't listen to you. But it is just as hard to deceive them. It is absolutely necessary in order to convince them, that you should be half convinced yourself. Hence Roudine had such influence on us all. I just told you he had not read a

great deal; but he had some knowledge of philosophical books, and a sort of mind which enabled him to get the general meaning of what he read. He seized the main idea of the subject, and then abandoned himself to its clear and methodical development, which he would present with great skill, inventing arguments as he went along. To tell the truth, I ought to say that we were a set of very young, half-educated boys. Philosophy, art, science, life itself, were for us mere words, vague though attractive ideas. We had no suspicion of there being any general connection between these ideas, or any common universal law; nothing of the sort ever occurred to us, although we were continually discussing these subjects and struggling to get some light. When we were listening to Roudine it seemed to us that for the first time we had found it, this universal connection; we thought that now the curtain was going to rise before us. To be sure, he gave it to us all at second hand — but what difference did that make? We had a regular order in everything we knew; all that had been fragmentary, combined suddenly, took its place,

and grew up before us like a vast edifice ; everywhere was light; from all sides streamed the breath of life. Nothing remained incomprehensible or accidental. For us in all creation there appeared only reasonable beauty and necessity. To everything was imparted a meaning, both clear and mysterious. Every separate phenomenon of life seemed an accord in a vast concert, and we, filled with the holy awe caused by a profound veneration, compared ourselves to living receptacles of eternal truth. We thought ourselves instruments designed for some great work. Does it not seem ridiculous?"

"Not at all," answered Alexandra slowly. "Why should you think so? I don't perfectly understand you, but it doesn't seem ridiculous."

"Since that time," continued Leschnieff, "we have had a chance to grow wiser; all that must seem to us now like foolishness. I repeat it, we owed a great deal then to Roudine. Pokorsky was much his superior, without doubt; at times, too, he used to animate us with his fire and force, but then again he felt averse to exertion and was silent. He

was a nervous, delicate man; if he had unfolded his wings — where would they not have taken him? Straight to the deepest blue of the heavens. But in Roudine, this handsome, brilliant young man, there was a great deal that was petty; he liked to gossip; he liked to have a hand in everything; to have his say and explain everything. His unceasing activity never knew repose. I speak of him as I knew him then. He has unfortunately not altered a bit. There is no change in his opinions — at thirty-five! It is not every one who can say that."

"Sit down," said Alexandra Paulovna, "you need not walk up and down the room as if you were a pendulum."

"I like it better," answered Leschnieff. "No sooner had I become acquainted with Pokorsky and his friends, than I felt myself born again. I grew calm, I asked questions, I studied, I was happy, and I felt a sort of reverence, as if I had entered into a sanctuary. In fact, when I recall our meetings — yes, there was something grand, something really touching about them. Imagine about five or six young men sitting together, only one candle lighting

them, they drinking wretched tea and eating some stale cake; but look at our faces, listen to our talk! In every one's face there is enthusiasm, and our cheeks are aglow, our heart is beating, we are talking of God, of truth, of the future, of humanity, of poetry, — at times a good deal of nonsense and crudity, but what is the harm? Pokorsky is sitting there with his legs under his chair, resting his pale cheek on his hands, but how his eyes are sparkling! Roudine is in the middle of the room; he talks admirably, like the young Demosthenes on the sea-shore. Subotine, the long-haired poet, from time to time ejaculates broken sentences, as if he were dreaming. Scheller, the son of a German clergyman, who was forty years old, and who, thanks to his eternal unbroken silence, passes for a very profound thinker, is now more solemnly silent than ever. The jolly Schitow himself, the Aristophanes of the company, grows still and only smiles; two or three novices are listening in a sort of ecstacy — and the night passes with its flight unnoticed. Then the gray dawn appears, and we separate joyous, sober, — for we never thought then of wine, — with

a certain lassitude, but with contented hearts. I remember it well, how all aglow with excitement I walked through the deserted streets, and even gazed up at the stars with a certain confidence, as if they had come nearer, and we could understand them better. Ah! that was a happy time, and I cannot believe it was wholly wasted. No, it was not wholly lost, not even for those who have sunk into the dreariest monotony of life. Occasionally I have met one of our old companions. You would have thought he had become a brute, but you only needed to pronounce Pokorsky's name, and every trace of noble feeling left within him was aroused. It was like uncorking a flask of perfume which one had found forgotten in some dark, obscure corner."

Lesckнieff was silent; his pale face was flushed.

"But why, when, did you quarrel with Roudine?" asked Alexandra Paulovna, looking at him intently.

"I did not quarrel with him; I parted from him finally when I had learned to know him in foreign parts. I might have separated from him at Moscow, because even there he treated me badly."

"How so?"

"I will tell you. I have always been — how shall I express myself? — it does not match my appearance — I have always been very much inclined to fall in love."

"You?"

"Yes, I. That is strange, is it not? But it is true, nevertheless. Well, I was interested at that time in a very charming young girl — why do you look at me so? I could tell you something which would surprise you much more."

"What is it? you make me curious."

"Simply this. During this time at Moscow, I used to have a rendezvous at night — with whom do you suppose? — with a young linden-tree at the end of the garden. When I embraced its slender trunk it seemed to me that I clasped the universe; my heart swelled within me and quivered as if all nature had penetrated into it. Yes, that is what I was. Do you imagine possibly that I didn't write verses at that period? You would be very much mistaken. I composed a whole play in imitation of Byron's 'Manfred.' Among the characters was a ghost; from his heart streamed

blood, but not, of course, his own blood, but that of all humanity. Yes, but don't be astonished. I have changed a great deal, have I not? But I began to tell you my romance. I made the acquaintance of a young woman" —

"And you gave up your visits to the linden?" asked Alexandra Paulovna.

"I gave them up. That young woman was very good-natured, which did not prevent her being very pretty. Her eyes were bright and limpid, her voice as clear as a bell."

"You give me a life-like description," said Alexandra with a fine smile.

"You are a harsh critic," answered Leschnieff. "Well, this girl used to live with her old father — but I won't go into tiresome details. I must repeat, however, that she was really as kind a creature as you can imagine; she was sure to fill the cup to the brim, if I asked for only half a cup of tea. Three days after our first meeting, I was madly in love with her, and at the end of a week I could not help confiding the whole story to Roudine. Young lovers can

never keep their feelings to themselves. At that time I was very much under his influence, and this influence, I must confess, was in many ways beneficial. He was the first person who ever paid me any attention; he gave me a sort of polish. I was passionately devoted to Pokorsky, but I felt a certain timidity before the purity of his soul. I was more intimate with Roudine. When he heard about my love, he became indescribably enthusiastic, he congratulated me, fell on my neck, and even began to make long speeches to me to show the importance of my new condition. I was all attention — you know, too, how he talks. His words made a very great impression on me. I suddenly conceived a very high opinion of myself, adopted a very serious air, and gave up laughing. I remember I even began to walk pompously, as if I were balancing a vessel full of some precious liquid which I feared to spill. I was very happy, and all the more so because I met with no rebuffs. Roudine wanted to make the girl's acquaintance; perhaps I even insisted on introducing him."

"Ah! I see what you have against him," interrupted Alexandra Paulovna. "Roudine cut you out, and you cannot forgive him for it. I would be willing to bet I've hit it."

"And you would lose your bet, Alexandra Paulovna. You are wrong. Roudine did not cut me out, nor did he try to, and yet he ruined my happiness; though now, looking at it in cold blood, I feel very grateful to him. But then it almost drove me out of my head. Roudine did not mean to do me an ill turn — on the contrary. But following his wretched habit of dissecting every phenomenon of his own life and that of others, and pinning them with some phrase, as one pins butterflies in a case, he began to explain to us the nature of our feelings, to define our relations to one another, our conduct, to oblige us to take account of our impressions and thoughts, and, passing from praise to blame, he even went so far — can you believe it? — as to enter into correspondence with us. In a word, he managed to throw us into perfect confusion. Then I could hardly have married the girl, so much common sense at

any rate was left in me; yet we might have passed a few happy months like Paul and Virginia. But there came misunderstandings and complications of every sort. The end of it all was, that one fine day Roudine imagined it was his solemn duty, as friend, to inform the father of what was going on, and he did."

"Is it possible?" cried Alexandra Paulovna.

"Yes, and observe, it was with my consent. That is the strangest part of it. I well remember the perfect chaos in which I was plunged. Everything was turning and changing as in a magic-lantern; black seemed white, and white black; falsehood truth, and whim duty. I blush to-day when I think of it. Roudine was not dismayed — why should he have been? — he soared above these misunderstandings and complications like a swallow over a lake."

"And so that is the way you parted from the girl?' asked Alexandra Paulovna, naively bending her head a trifle, and raising her eyebrows.

"I parted from her; it was a very bad, offensive

tactless, uselessly public parting; I wept, she wept, and the deuce knows how it was. A gordian knot held us. I ought to have cut it boldly, but that would have been painful. But then it all settled itself in the best possible way. She has since married an excellent man, and is perfectly happy."

"Now confess you have never been able to forgive Roudine," said Alexandra.

"You are mistaken," answered Leschnieff. "I cried like a child when he left the country. But to tell the truth, the germ of my present opinion was already lying in my mind. When I next met him I was older, and Roudine appeared to me in his true colors."

"How was it you found him out?"

"That is what I've been telling you this last hour. But enough about him. Perhaps it will all come out right yet. I only wanted to convince you that if I judged him harshly, it was because I knew him well. As for Natalie Alexievna — why waste one's words? But consider your brother."

"My brother, and why?"

"Just observe him. Don't you notice anything?"

Alexandra lowered her eyes.

"You are right," she said; "my brother — he's been another man for some time; but do you think" —

"Hush! I think I hear him coming," whispered Leschnieff. "Believe me, Natalie is no child, although she lacks experience. You will see she will surprise us all yet."

"What do you mean?"

"Don't rely on her calm appearance. Don't you know those are just the girls who drown themselves, who take poison, and all that? Her passions are strong, and her character too."

"Really, you are rising into lyric poetry. To such a calm-blooded person as you, I probably seem like a volcano."

"Oh no, you are no volcano," answered Leschnieff, smiling; "and as for character, thank Heaven, you haven't any."

"What new impertinence is that?"

"Really, that impertinence is a very great compliment."

Volinzoff entered the room casting suspicious glances at his sister and Leschnieff. Within a few weeks he had grown thin. Alexandra and Leschnieff tried to talk to him, but he only answered their jests with a smile. He seemed like a "melancholy hare," as Pigasoff said in speaking of him one evening. Volinzoff felt that Natalie was slipping from him, and it seemed to him that at the same time the earth was falling away from beneath his feet.

VIII.

THE next day was Sunday, and Natalie did not get up till rather late. The previous evening she had been very silent; she had felt ashamed of her tears, and had slept badly. She sat down half dressed at her little piano, occasionally striking a few chords, but very softly, in order not to awaken Miss Boncourt; or again, resting her brow on the cool keys, she gave herself up to reverie, not thinking so much of Roudine himself as of certain words he had uttered. Occasionally Volinzoff's image would occur to her. She knew that he loved her, but she drove the thought from her mind at once. She felt strangely agitated. She dressed hastily, went down-stairs to bid her mother good-morning, and then availed herself of the opportunity to stroll alone in the garden.

It was a warm, clear, sunny day, although from time to time brief showers fell from the low, misty clouds which were floating slowly across the sky, without obscuring the sun. Large, glistening drops on which the sun was shining would fall like diamonds with a pattering sound ; the grass, which had just bent before the breeze, was quiet, as if to breathe the dampness exhaled from the ground; the wet leaves rustled on the trees ; the birds went on singing without interruption, and it was a pleasure to listen to their joyous twitter through all the cool patter of the rain and the soft murmur of the breeze as the shower passed over. Little whirls of dust appeared in the road which seemed spotted by the rain-drops. But the cloud is over, a light wind has arisen, the grass is aglow with gold and emerald, bowing again before the breeze. . . . . The leaves are joined together by the rain. It is lighter in the summer-house. . . . . A rich perfume arises everywhere.

The sky was nearly clear when Natalie went into the garden. Everywhere was freshness and calmness, that gentle, happy calm which calls up in the heart of man

a soft, mysterious, sympathetic languor, and vague desires.

As Natalie was walking beneath a row of silver poplars along the side of the lake, she suddenly saw Roudine appear before her as if he had sprung up from beneath the ground. She was confused. He fastened his eyes upon her and said, —

"You are alone?"

"Yes, I am alone," answered Natalie; "I only came out for a moment to enjoy the fresh air. . . . . I must go back."

"I will go with you."

And he walked along by her side.

"You seem out of spirits," he said after a short pause.

"I? . . . . I was just going to say the same thing to you. You are rather melancholy, it seems to me."

"It's very possible. . . . . I am so sometimes. But it's more pardonable in me than in you."

"Why so? Do you think I have nothing to make me sad?"

"At your age one ought to enjoy life."

Natalie walked on a few steps in silence.

"Dimitri Nicolaïtch!" she began.

"What is it?"

"Do you remember .... the comparison you made yesterday .... it was .... about the oak?"

"Yes, I remember it. But why this question?"

Natalie glanced at him askance.

"Why did you .... what did you mean by that comparison?"

Roudine bowed his head and gazed into the distance.

"Natalie Alexievna," he began, with his usual restrained expression, so full of meaning, which always made his hearers imagine that he was telling them only the tenth part of what burdened his soul, "Natalie Alexievna, you must have noticed that I speak very little about my past life. There are certain chords which I never touch. My heart .... who cares to know what it has undergone? To make such things known I have always regarded as frivolity. But with you I am sincere; you inspire me with

confidence . . . . I have no wish to conceal from you that I too have loved and suffered like every one else. . . . . When and how? it's not worth while to speak of that; it is enough to say that my heart has known great joys and great sorrows."

Roudine was silent for an instant.

"What I said to you yesterday," he continued, "may be applied to me in my present situation, up to a certain point. But, again, there is no need of speaking of that. This side of life has disappeared forever for me. It only remains for me now to let myself be carried from one station to another over the hot, dusty highway of life, in some wretched carriage. . . . . When I shall reach my destination . . . . whether I shall reach it at all — Heaven alone knows. . . . . Let us rather talk about you."

"It is not possible, Dimitri Nicolaïtch," interrupted Natalie, "that you expect nothing more from life!"

"Oh no! I expect a great deal; but not for myself. . . . . I shall never give up my activity, my delight in working; but I have renounced all hope of enjoyment. My hopes, my

visions, have nothing in common with my own happiness. Love" — at this word he shrugged his shoulders — "love is not for me; I am unworthy of it; a woman who loves has a right to claim that the man she has chosen should be wholly hers; but I can no longer give myself up wholly, and then, to please is the privilege of youth, and I am too old. How can I turn girls' heads? May I only keep my own on my shoulders!"

"I understand," answered Natalie, "that any one who is striving for a lofty aim should not think about himself; but why should not a woman be capable of appreciating such men? It seems to me, on the contrary, that they turn away very quickly from the egoist. According to you, all young people are egoists; they are thinking only of themselves, even when they love. Believe me, a woman not only has the power of understanding a sacrifice, she also knows how to sacrifice herself."

Natalie's cheeks were slightly colored, and her eyes were glistening. Before she had known Roudine, she never could have uttered so long and passionate a speech.

"You have more than once heard my opinions on the province of women," answered Roudine, with an indulgent smile. "You know I think that only Joan of Arc could have saved France. . . . . but that is not the question. I wanted to speak about you. You stand on the threshold of life. . . . . It is pleasant to speak about your future, and it may not be without profit. . . . . Listen to me: I am your friend, you know; I take as keen an interest in you, as if I were a relative. . . . . Hence I hope you will not consider my question impertinent. Tell me, has your heart always been completely calm ?"

Natalie colored deeply, and made no answer. Roudine stood still, and she also.

"Are you offended ?" he asked.

"No, but I did not in the least expect" . . . .

"Besides," he continued, "you don't need to answer me. I know your secret."

Natalie glanced at him with an air of terror.

"Yes . . . . yes; I know who it is that pleases you — and, I must say — you could not make a better choice.

He is an excellent man ; he will be able to appreciate you ; life has not injured him — his soul is simple — he will make you happy."

" Of whom are you speaking, Dimitri Nicolaïtch ? "

" Don't you know ? Of Volinzoff, of course. What ! Can I be wrong ? "

Natalie turned a little away from Roudine. She had lost all self-command.

" Doesn't he love you ? But see, he is always looking at you, he follows with his eyes every motion you make. And then can love hide itself ? And don't you like him ? So far as I have been able to see, he is agreeable to your mother. . . . . Your choice " . . . .

" Dimitri Nicolaïtch ! " interrupted Natalie, in her confusion pointing at a neighboring bush, " really, it is painful for me to talk on this subject, but I assure you you are mistaken."

" I am mistaken ! " repeated Roudine. " Oh, I do not think so. . . . . To be sure, it is only a short time since I made your acquaintance, but I know you very well. What

is the meaning of this change which I see in you, see in you very clearly? Are you the same being I met here six weeks ago? No, Natalie Alexievna, your heart is not tranquil."

"That may be," answered Natalie, in a hardly audible voice, "but still you are mistaken."

"How so?" asked Roudine.

"Leave me, don't ask me" . . . . said Natalie, walking rapidly towards the house.

She was alarmed at the feeling which had suddenly awakened within her.

Roudine hastened after her and stopped her.

"Natalie Alexievna!" he said, "our conversation cannot end in this way; it is of too much importance for me. . . . . How am I to understand you?"

"Leave me," repeated Natalie.

"Natalie, for the love of God!"

Roudine's face expressed the keenest emotion. He had grown pale.

"You understand everything, you ought to understand

me," said Natalie, as she withdrew her hand and walked away without looking around.

"Only one word," cried Roudine. She stopped, but did not turn round.

"You asked me what I meant by that comparison yesterday. Hear me. I do not wish to deceive you. I was speaking of myself, of my past life, and of you."

"What? of me?"

"Yes, of you; I repeat it; I do not wish to deceive you. . . . . Now you know of what feeling, of what new feeling I was speaking. . . . . Before to-day I have never ventured" . . . .

Natalie quickly covered her face with her hands and ran towards the house. She was so agitated at the unexpected issue of her conversation that she did not notice Volinzoff, past whom she had run. He stood motionless, with his back against a tree. A quarter of an hour before, he had arrived at Daria's, had met her in the parlor, said a word or two, and then he had gone out to find Natalie.

Guided by the instinct peculiar to lovers, he had gone straight to the garden, where he came upon Roudine and Natalie at the very moment that she withdrew her hand from his. All grew dark before his eyes. Gazing after Natalie he left the tree, and advanced a few steps, without knowing whither he was going. Roudine saw him, and went up to him. They looked at one another steadily, bowed, and separated in silence.

"This is not the end," they both thought.

Volinzoff walked on to the end of the garden. A feeling of stolid despair had taken possession of him. A heavy load lay on his heart, and then suddenly a hot wrath made the blood boil in his veins. The rain began to fall again. Roudine had gone to his room. Neither was he calm; his thoughts were all in a whirl. What man would not be perturbed at the unexpected, confiding surrender of a pure, noble soul?

At table nothing went smoothly. Natalie was very pale; she could hardly sit up, and she did not raise her eyes. Volinzoff sat by her side, as usual, and forced himself to

speak to her every now and then. It happened that Pigasoff was present, and he talked more than all the rest. He undertook to prove, among other things, that it was possible to classify men, like dogs, as long-eared men, and short-eared men. "Men," he said, "have short ears, either from their birth, or by their own fault. In both cases they are to be pitied, for they never succeed in anything — they lack self-confidence. But the long-eared man is fortunate. He may be a worse man or a weaker man than the short-eared one, but he has confidence in himself; he has only to put up his ears — and all admire him. As for me," he added with a sigh, "I belong to the short-eared class, and the worst of it is, I clipped my own ears."

"By all that," interrupted Roudine indifferently, "you mean what La Rochefoucauld said a long time ago: Have confidence in yourself, and others will believe in you.' I don't see the necessity of lugging in the ears."

"Let everybody" — retorted Volinzoff curtly, with an angry glance — "let everybody express himself as he pleases. We were talking of despotism. . . . . In my opin-

ion there's no more odious despotism than that of so-called intelligent people. Away with them all!"

This outburst of Volinzoff's astonished every one; no one said a word. Roudine glanced at him, but unable to meet his rival's eyes, he looked away with a forced smile and said nothing.

"Oh, oh! so you too have short ears!" said Pigasoff to himself. Natalie trembled from fear. Daria Michaëlovna gazed for a long time with astonishment at Volinzoff, and was the first one to resume talking. She began to tell about a remarkable dog that belonged to her friend, the minister, N. N.

Volinzoff went off soon after dinner. In taking leave of Natalie he could not help saying, —

"Why are you so confused, as if you had committed some crime? You cannot be conscious of any wrong to any one."

Natalie had not understood him, and merely followed him with her eyes. Roudine went up to her before tea, and leaning over the table as if he were reading a newspaper he whispered to her: —

"It is all like a dream, is it not? I must see you alone .... if only for an instant." He turned towards Miss Boncourt. "Here is the paper you were looking for;" then he turned again to Natalie and added, "Try to be near the terrace at about ten o'clock, in the lilac arbor. I will await you."

Pigasoff was the hero of the evening. Roudine had abandoned the field. He made Daria Michaëlovna laugh a great deal; in the first place he told her about one of his neighbors who had grown so effeminate by being tied for thirty years to his wife's apron-string, that one day, when stepping over a puddle, he, Pigasoff, had seen him put his hands behind him and lift up his coat-tails as women do their skirts. After that he fell upon another man who had been first a freemason, then a misanthrope, and at last was trying to become a banker.

But Daria was especially amused when Pigasoff began to talk about love, and to assure her that women had sighed for him, and an ardent German woman had called him "her delicious little Africanus." Daria laughed, yet

Pigasoff was telling the truth; he had really a right to boast of his successes. He declared that there was nothing easier than to make any woman you pleased fall in love with you; one only needed to tell her ten days in succession that paradise was on her lips, bliss in her eyes, and that other women were ugly creatures in comparison with her, and on the eleventh day she would say to herself that paradise was on her lips, bliss in her eyes, and she would fall in love with the man who had detected such charming traits in her. In this world anything may happen; perhaps Pigasoff was right. Who knows?

At half past nine Roudine was in the arbor. The stars were just appearing in the pale, distant depths of the sky; the glow of the sunset still lingered in the west, — on that side the horizon was still clearly marked. The half-moon gleamed like gold against the dark interlacing branches of the birches. The other trees stood like vast giants; the sky, visible through the net-work of their leaves, glistened like myriads of eyes, or else they melted together in a sombre mass. Not a leaf was moving; the long branches of lilac

and the acacias stretched forth into the fragrant air as if they were listening to some unheard voice. The house stood dark, the long, lit-up windows shone like red spots against the dark background. The evening was calm and silent; it seemed as if a restrained, passionate sigh were breathing mysteriously in the stillness.

Roudine stood with folded arms, listening with the utmost eagerness. His heart was beating violently, and he involuntarily held his breath. At last he thought he heard light, hasty steps — and Natalie entered the arbor.

Roudine hastened towards her, and raised her hands. They were cold as ice.

"Natalie Alexievna!" he said with emotion, "I wanted to see you. . . . . I could not wait till to-morrow. I must tell you what I myself did not suspect, did not imagine before this morning. I love you!"

Natalie's hands trembled gently within his own.

"I love you!" he repeated; "I don't know how I could have been blind so long . . . . that I could not have sus-

pected for so long that I loved you . . . . and you? Natalie . . . . answer me — and you?"

Natalie could hardly breathe.

"You see I came here," she said at last.

"Tell me, do you love me?"

"I think . . . . yes" . . . . she whispered.

Roudine pressed her hands more warmly and tried to draw her towards him.

"Leave me — I am afraid — I think some one is listening to us. . . . . For God's sake, be prudent. Volinzoff suspects something."

"He may. You noticed I did not answer him to-day. . . . . Ah, Natalie, how happy I am! Now nothing can separate us!"

Natalie raised her eyes till they met his.

"Leave me," she murmured, "it is time for me to go back."

"One moment."

"No, leave, leave me" . . . .

"Are you afraid of me?"

"No; but I ought not to stay."

"Tell me again, just once" . . . .

"You say you are happy?" asked Natalie.

"Yes, I am the happiest man in the world. Can you doubt it?"

Natalie had raised her head. Her pale face, so young, so noble, so agitated, was fair to see in the dim light which streamed from the pale sky into the mysterious gloom of the arbor.

"Hear me, then," she said, "I will be your wife."

"Oh, heaven!" cried Roudine.

But Natalie had already fled. Roudine stood a moment, and then slowly left the arbor. The moon shone full upon his face; a smile was on his lips.

"I am happy," he murmured to himself. "Yes, I am happy," he repeated, as if he were trying to convince himself of it.

He straightened himself, tossed back his hair, and walked on swinging his arms joyfully.

But meanwhile the branches in the lilac bower were

pushed apart, and Pandalewski appeared. He looked around cautiously, shook his head, pressed his lips together and said meaningly, "Oh ho! so that's the way the matters stand! I must tell Daria." And he disappeared.

IX.

VOLINZOFF reached home so gloomy and dejected, he gave such short answers to his sister, and locked himself up so speedily in his room, that she determined to send at once a messenger after Leschnieff. In all embarrassing matters she was accustomed to apply to him. Leschnieff sent back word that he would come the next day.

On the following morning Volinzoff was not in better spirits than the evening before. After breakfast he thought of going out to superintend the work which was going on, but he remained at home, stretched upon a sofa, and, what was remarkable, holding a book in his hand. Volinzoff took a very slight interest in literature; for poetry especially he had great distaste. "As incomprehensible as a poem," he used to say, and he would

confirm his remark by quoting these lines from Aibulat: —

"Even to the end of my sad days,
Neither experience nor reason
Shall tear from my hands
The bleeding forget-me-nots of life."

Alexandra Paulovna looked anxiously at her brother, but she did not annoy him with questions. A carriage drove up to the house. "Ah! thank Heaven," she thought, "there is Leschnieff." The servant entered and announced Roudine.

Volinzoff threw his book on the floor, and raised his head.

"Who is it?" he asked.

"Roudine — Dimitri Nicolaïtch," repeated the servant.

Volinzoff arose.

"Ask him in; and you, sister, leave us alone," he added, turning to Alexandra.

"But why?" she objected.

"I have my reasons," he answered briefly; "please go."

Roudine entered. Volinzoff greeted him coldly, standing in the middle of the room, and not holding out his hand.

"Confess that you did not expect to see me," said Roudine, laying his hat on the window-seat. He was by no means at ease, but he tried to conceal his embarrassment.

"I certainly did not expect to see you," answered Volinzoff. "After what happened yesterday, I expected rather to see some one with a message from you."

"I understand you," said Roudine, sitting down, "and I am very grateful for your frankness. It is much better so. I came myself to you, as to a man of honor" . . . .

"Can't we dispense with compliments?" interrupted Volinzoff.

"I want to explain to you why I have come."

"We are acquaintances; why shouldn't you come? Besides, it is not the first time that you have honored me with a call."

"I have come to you as one man of honor to another mar

of honor," repeated Roudine. "I now wish to submit to your judgment . . . . I have perfect confidence in you " . . . .

" Come, what is it you have to say ? " asked Volinzoff, still standing in the same position, casting angry glances at Roudine, and from time to time twirling his mustache.

" Excuse me . . . . I came to explain myself, but I can't do it in a couple of words."

" Why not ? "

" Because it concerns a third person."

" A third person ! and whom ? "

" Sergius Paulitch, you understand me."

" Dimitri Nicolaïtch, I do not in the least understand you."

" You want " . . . .

" I want you to speak without beating about the bush," interrupted Volinzoff.

He was growing very angry. Roudine frowned.

" Very well . . . . we are alone. . . . . I have to tell you — probably you have already guessed " (Volinzoff shrugged his shoulders impatiently) — " I have to tell you

that I love Natalie Alexievna, and that I have reason to suppose that she loves me."

Volinzoff grew pale, and made no answer; he turned his face away, and walked towards the window.

"You understand, Sergius Paulitch," continued Roudine, "that if I were not convinced" . . . .

"Yes, exactly," interrupted Volinzoff quickly, "I don't doubt at all . . . . Well! so much the better for you! Only I can't help wondering what the devil induced you to come to me with this bit of news. . . . . What business is it of mine, whom you love or who loves you? I really can't understand" . . . .

Volinzoff continued to gaze out of the window. His voice was hollow.

Roudine arose.

"Sergius Paulitch, I will tell you why I decided to call on you in person, and why I did not think it right to conceal our . . . . our mutual positions. I have much respect for you — that's why I came; I did not want — neither of us wanted to play a part in your presence. I knew your

feelings towards Natalie. . . . . Believe me, I know my own value; I know how unworthy I am to replace you in her heart, but since fate has decided in this way, is it not better to act frankly and loyally? Is it not better to avoid misunderstandings and such scenes as took place at dinner yesterday? Confess it yourself, Sergius Paulitch."

Volinzoff folded his arms as if he found it hard to control himself.

"Sergius Paulitch," continued Roudine, "I feel that I have offended you . . . . but don't misunderstand me. . . . . You must see that we had no other way than this to express to you our esteem, to show that we are able to appreciate the noble candor of your nature. With any one else this frankness, this perfect frankness, would be out of place; but towards you it is our duty. It is a pleasure for us to think that our secret is in your hands." . . . .

Volinzoff burst into a forced laugh.

"Many thanks for your confidence," he cried; "but you will please observe that although I neither desired to know your secret nor to disclose mine to you, you treat it as your

own property. But allow me; you speak in the name of some one else. Am I to suppose that Natalie Alexievna has any knowledge of your visit and its intention?"

At these last words Roudine grew a little embarrassed.

"No; I did not tell Natalie what I was going to do, but I know that she shares my views."

"That is all very fine," answered Volinzoff, after a moment's pause, during which he beat with his fingers on the window pane, "but I must say I should much prefer if you had . . . . had a less favorable opinion of me. To tell the truth, your good opinion is not worth a farthing. Come, what do you want of me now?"

"I want nothing . . . . or rather, I do want something. I don't want you to consider me a sly, crafty man; I want you to know me. . . . . I hope now that you will have no doubt of my sincerity. . . . . I hope, Sergius Paulitch, that we may part as friends . . . . that you will offer me your hand as heretofore."

And Roudine advanced towards Volinzoff.

"Excuse me, sir," answered Volinzoff, turning round

and retreating a step. "I am ready to put implicit faith in your intentions; all that is very fine, very grand; but we are plain people, we are unable to follow the flights of such exalted spirits as your own. . . . . What seems to you sincere seems to us impudent. . . . . What you consider plain and clear, we consider confused and obscure. . . . . You brag of things we keep secret; how can we understand one another? Excuse me, I can neither count you among my friends, nor offer you my hand. . . . . Perhaps my conduct is petty, but I'm a petty fellow."

Roudine took his hat.

"Sergius Paulitch, good-by!" he said sadly. "My expectations have been deceived. In fact, my visit was a singular one, but I hoped that you" . . . . Volinzoff made an impatient gesture. . . . . "Excuse me, I'll not speak of that. When I think of it, I see that you are really right, that you could not act otherwise. Farewell, and at least allow me once more to assure you of the sincerity of my intentions. . . . . I am convinced you will respect our secret." . . .

"That is too much!" burst out Volinzoff, trembling with passion. "I did not thrust myself into your confidence; and hence you have no right to count upon my silence."

Roudine was about to answer, but he merely opened his arms, bowed, and left the room; Volinzoff flung himself on the sofa and turned his face to the wall.

"Can I come in?" said Alexandra at the door.

Volinzoff did not answer at once, and passed his hand quickly over his face.

"No, Sacha," he said with a somewhat broken voice; "wait a few moments."

"Michael Michaëlovitch has come," she said; "do you want to see him?"

"Yes," he answered; "ask him to come in."

Leschnieff entered.

"Well, what ails you? are you sick?" he asked, sitting down in a chair near the sofa.

Volinzoff raised himself slowly and rested his head upon his arm. He gazed for a long time into his friend's face,

and then he repeated to him word for word his whole conversation with Roudine. Never before had he made any mention to Leschnieff of his feelings towards Natalie, although he might have conjectured that they were no secret to him.

"Do you know, you really astonish me?" said Leschnieff, when Volinzoff had finished. "I was prepared for a great many singular things on his part, but this is a little too much. . . . . But I recognize him in this too."

"Just consider," said Volinzoff, "it is nothing but a bit of insolence. I came very near throwing him out of the window. Does he want to boast before me, or is he afraid? And for what reason? How can one call on a man" . . . .

Volinzoff buried his head in his hands, and was silent.

"No, my friend, you are wrong," answered Leschnieff, quietly. "You won't believe me, but yet I am sure he did it with a good intention. Yes, really. . . . . Do you see, it has a certain streak of nobility and frankness, and gives him an opportunity to give free course to his eloquence. He needs that; without it he couldn't live. . . . . Ah, his

tongue, his flow of words . . . . that's his enemy . . . . but it has done him a good turn, too."

"You can't imagine with what a solemn air he came in and began to repeat his speech!"

"Oh, that's his way. If he buttons his coat, he does it as if he were discharging a holy duty. I should like to set him on a desert island and watch him from some corner, doing as he pleased. And he presumes to talk about simplicity!"

"But tell me, for Heaven's sake, what is the meaning of his conduct? Is it philosophy?"

"How can I say? In one way — you are right — it is philosophy; in another it is not, by any means. It is not fair to set every folly to the score of philosophy."

Volinzoff glanced at him.

"But if he was lying, what do you think?"

"No, my friend, he was not lying. But enough about him. We'll light our pipes, and ask Alexandra Paulovna in. . . . . When she's present, it's easier to talk and easier to remain silent. She will give us some tea."

"Very well," answered Volinzoff; "Sacha, come in."

Alexandra Paulovna entered. He took her hand and raised it tenderly to his lips.

Roudine reached home in a very unquiet state of mind. He reproached himself bitterly, and accused himself for his unpardonable haste and childishness. There is much truth in the saying that there is no load heavier than the feeling of having committed an act of folly.

Roudine was eaten by remorse.

"It was the devil himself," he muttered between his clenched teeth, "who gave me the idea of going to see the man! A good idea that was! It only brought down his insolence on my head!"

Something unusual was taking place at Daria's house. She herself did not appear all morning, and did not come down-stairs to dinner. Pandalewski, the only person she saw, declared she was suffering from a severe headache. Roudine had scarcely seen Natalie, who remained in her room with Miss Boncourt. . . . . When she came into the dining-room, she looked at him so sadly that his heart was

deeply pained. Her face had altered, as if some misfortune had fallen on her since the previous evening. A vague uneasiness, like a gloomy foreboding, began to affect Roudine. In order to distract himself he turned to Bassistoff. In talking with him for some time he found him an ardent, enthusiastic, confident youth, full of hope and inexperience. Towards evening Daria came into the parlor. She was very amiable to Roudine, though a trifle reserved. At times she would smile, then she would frown and utter some cutting allusions. She was the thorough woman of the world once more. For some days she had treated Roudine with a certain coldness.

"Who can solve the riddle?" he thought, as he looked askance at her head, which was tossed back.

He did not have to wait long for a solution. Towards midnight, as he was going through a dark passage way to his room, suddenly some one slipped a note into his hand. He looked around and saw a young girl running away, whom he recognized as Natalie's maid. He went into his room, dismissed his servant, opened the note, and

read the following lines, which were in Natalie's hand writing:

"Come to-morrow morning at seven o'clock, no later, to the lake Advioukine near the oak-grove. I can't set any other hour. We shall meet for the last time, and all is over unless . . . . Come. A decision must be made.

"P. S. If I don't come, we shall never meet again. In that case I shall let you know."

Roudine grew thoughtful; he turned the note between his fingers, placed it beneath his pillow, undressed, and went to bed; but he could not find the repose he sought. He slept lightly, and was awake before five o'clock.

X.

For a long time there had existed only slight traces of this lake of Advioukine, near which Natalie had asked Roudine to meet her. Thirty years before, the dike had broken and let the water escape. Only the uniformly level bottom of the ravine, once covered with a thick slime, and the remains of the dam, recalled the existence of a lake. Formerly a mansion-house stood close by. Of the dense grove of trees which had surrounded the house, now only two enormous pines remained; through their thinly-clad branches the winds murmured unceasingly.

The story ran that a terrible crime had been committed at the foot of these trees; some even said that neither of them would fall without killing some one. Formerly a third had stood there, which had been blown over by a

gale, and in its fall had killed a little girl. All the neighborhood of the lake had the name of being haunted; drear, desolate, barren, and gloomy even at midday, it was made only drearier and gloomier by the proximity of a grove of long dead and withered oaks. Above the undergrowth arose at rare intervals huge, gray trunks, like spectres. It made one shudder to look at them; they were like wicked gray-beards who had met to devise some evil plan. A narrow, unused path led along the side of the ravine. No one passed by that way unless compelled to; hence Natalie had purposely chosen this spot, which was about half a verst distant from Daria Michaëlovna's house.

The sun had long since risen when Roudine reached the lake; but the morning was not bright. Thick, gray clouds covered the whole sky; the wind was tossing them in every direction. Roudine began to walk to and fro through the thistles and nettles which covered the dike. He was by no means calm. These mysterious meetings, these new emotions, agitated him very much, especially since the note he had received the evening before. He felt that the

crisis was approaching, and in his heart he was very much disturbed, although no one would have imagined it who might have seen him gazing around him, with his arms firmly folded. It was not without truth that Pigasoff had once said, speaking of Roudine, that he was like those Chinese toys which always stood with the head uppermost. But when a man is controlled by his head alone, it is hard for him, however intelligent he may be, to analyze certain feelings, and to understand thoroughly what is going on in his heart. . . . . Roudine, the intelligent, acute Roudine, could not say with certainty whether or not he loved Natalie, whether he was suffering, or whether he would suffer if he should be obliged to part from her. Why then, without playing the part of a Lovelace — for so much justice must be done him — had he allowed himself to turn this poor girl's head? Why did he await her with a mysterious trembling? To this there is only one answer: those who are the most void of passion are the readiest to let themselves be carried away. He was walking up and down upon the dike, whi.e

Natalie was hastening across the fields, through the wet grass, to meet him.

"Miss Natalie, you will wet your feet," cried Macha, her maid, hardly able to keep up with her.

Natalie paid no attention, and ran without looking behind her.

"Oh, if only nobody saw us!" said Macha repeatedly. "It's strange that no one heard us coming out of the house. If Miss Boncourt doesn't wake up. Fortunately it's not very far. . . . . There he is waiting," she added, as she saw Roudine's tall figure, standing picturesquely on the dike. "But he ought not to stand there, where he can be seen. . . . . He ought to go into the ravine."

Natalie stopped.

"Wait here by the pines, Macha," she said, advancing towards the lake.

Roudine came forward to meet her, and stopped in amazement. He had never seen such an expression on her face. Her eyebrows were drawn together, her lips were tightly closed, her eyes had a severe, almost a harsh look.

"Dimitri Nicolaïtch," she began, "we have no time to lose. I have come for five minutes; my mother knows everything. Mr. Pandalewski was listening to us day before yesterday, and he told her about our meeting. He has always been mamma's spy. Yesterday she sent for me."

"Heavens, that is terrible!" cried Roudine. "What did she say?"

"She was not angry, she did not scold me; she only blamed me for my thoughtlessness."

"Was that all?"

"Yes; then she told me she would rather I should be dead than your wife."

"Did she really say that?"

"Yes; and then she added that you did not care to marry me, that you had paid me attention only from lack of anything better to do, and that she had not expected any such abuse of her confidence on your part; and that, besides, she was herself to blame for having allowed us to be so much together. . . . . She said she had had perfect

confidence in my good sense, and that she was very much astonished at my thoughtless conduct. . . . . I don't remember everything she said."

Natalie uttered all this in a uniform, almost inaudible voice.

"And you, Natalie, what did you say?" asked Roudine.

"What did I say?" repeated Natalie; "but in the first place, what do you mean to do?"

"Great God," resumed Roudine, "that is cruel! so soon! . . . . such an unexpected blow! . . . . and your mother is really angry?"

"Yes . . . . yes, she won't hear of you."

"That is terrible! There is then no hope?"

"None."

"Why am I so pitilessly pursued by misfortune! That Pandalewski is a wretch! . . . . You ask me, Natalie, what I mean to do? My head is in a whirl . . . . I can't collect my thoughts . . . . I can only feel my misfortunes. I am surprised that you can be so collected."

"Do you think I find it easy?" answered Natalie.

Roudine began to walk up and down the dike. Natalie kept her eyes fastened upon him.

"Didn't your mother ask you any questions?" he asked at last.

"She asked me if I loved you."

"Well . . . . and you answered?"

Natalie was silent for a moment. . . . . "I told her the truth."

Roudine seized her hand.

"Always, in everything, noble and great. Oh, a girl's heart is like pure gold! But is it possible that your mother was so fixed in opposition to our marriage?"

"Yes, firmly. I have already told you, she is convinced you have no intention of marrying me."

"She considers me, then, an impostor! How do I deserve such a suspicion?"

And Roudine covered his face with his hands.

"Dimitri Nicolaïtch," said Natalie, "we are wasting our time. Remember, I see you for the last time. I did not

come here to weep, nor to complain — you see I am not weeping — I came to get your advice."

"What advice can I give you, Natalie Alexievna?"

"What advice? You are a man; I have been accustomed to have confidence in you; I shall believe in you to the last. Tell me, what are your intentions?"

"My intentions! your mother will probably forbid me the house."

"Possibly. She told me yesterday she must break off her acquaintance with you. . . . . But you don't answer my question."

"What question?"

"What do you think we should do now?"

"What should we do?" repeated Roudine; "we must submit."

"Submit!" repeated Natalie, her lips turning white.

"Submit to our fate," continued Roudine. "What else can we do? I know very well that resignation will be bitter, that this blow is hard to bear; but judge for yourself, Natalie. I am poor. . . . . I could work, it is true

but even if I were rich, could you endure this violent separation from your family, the anger of your mother? . . . . No, Natalie, that is not to be thought of. It is clear we are not destined to live together, and that the happiness of which I had dreamed is not for me."

Natalie suddenly covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears. Roudine went towards her.

"Natalie, dear Natalie!" he said with warmth, "do not weep; for God's sake, do not torture me; calm yourself."

Natalie raised her head.

"You tell me to calm myself," she began, and her eyes glowed brightly beneath her tears. "I am not weeping for the reason which you suppose. . . . . That does not pain me; but it does pain me to find myself deceived in you. . . . . What! I come to seek advice, counsel from you, and in what a moment! and your first word is 'Submit!' Is that the way you put in practice your theories of resignation, of sacrifice?"

Her voice failed her.

"Remember, Natalie," began Roudine, embarrassed, "I do not abandon my principles . . . . only" . . . .

"You asked me," she began with new force, "what answer I gave my mother, when she said she would rather see me dead than consent to my marriage with you. I told her I would rather be dead than be the wife of any one else. . . . . And you talk of submission! She was right; you were attentive to me only from having nothing better to do — only to kill time" . . . .

"I swear to you, Natalie . . . . I swear to you" . . . . repeated Roudine.

But she did not listen to him.

"Why didn't you warn me at the beginning? Why did you have to . . . . or why didn't you foresee the obstacles? I am ashamed to talk in this way . . . . but it's all over now."

"You must calm yourself, Natalie," began Roudine again; "we must contrive some means" . . . .

"You have so often spoken of self-sacrifice," she interrupted; "but do you know that if you had said to me just

now, 'I love you, but I can't marry you; I can't answer for the future; give me your hand and follow me,' — do you know I should have followed you, that I was ready for everything! But from words to deeds is farther than I thought, and now you are afraid, as you were afraid of Volinzoff the other day at dinner."

Roudine's face flushed crimson. Natalie's sudden excitement had surprised him, but these last words wounded to the quick his self-love.

"You are too excited now, Natalie," he began; "you cannot understand what cruel wrong you do me. I hope that some day you will do me justice; you will understand then what it costs me to renounce the happiness which, by your own confession, would place no obligation upon me. Your peace is dearer to me than all the world, and I should be a wretch if I should decide to take advantage" . . . .

"Perhaps," murmured Natalie, "perhaps you are right. I don't know what I'm saying. Up to this meeting I believed in you, I believed in every one of your words. . . . Henceforth, I beg of you, weigh your words; don't hurl

them away so carelessly. When I said I loved you, I knew what my words meant; I was ready for everything. . . . . It only remains for me to thank you for the lesson you have given me, and to bid you good-by."

"Stop, I beseech you, for God's sake, Natalie. I have not deserved your contempt; that I swear to you. Just put yourself in my place. I am responsible for you and for me. If I did not love beyond all measure, what could have prevented me from proposing to run away with you at once? . . . . Sooner or later, your mother would have forgiven us . . . . and then . . . . But before thinking of my own happiness" . . . .

He was silent. Natalie's eyes were gazing on him steadily. . . . . He had to stop.

"You try to convince me that you are an honest man, Dimitri Nicolaïtch," she said. "I don't doubt it. You are incapable of acting from calculation; but do I need any proof of that? Was it for that I came here?"

"I did not anticipate, Natalie" . . . .

"Ah! at last you have said it! You didn't anticipate

all this — you didn't know me. But calm yourself ; you don't love me, and I don't thrust myself upon anybody."

"I do love you!" cried Roudine.

Natalie straightened herself.

"Possibly ; but how do you love me? I recall all your words, Dimitri Nicolaïtch. Do you remember saying to me one day that there was no love without perfect equality between those who loved? . . . . You are too lofty for me, we are not equals. . . . . I am punished as I deserved. Some worthier occupation awaits you. I shall not forget this day. . . . . Farewell!"

"Natalie, you are going? Is it possible that we part thus?"

He held out his hand. She stopped. His tone of entreaty seemed to weaken her resolution.

"No," she cried at last, "I feel something is shattered within me. . . . . I came here and spoke to you as in a delirium ; I must compose myself. That cannot be ; you have said it yourself; that shall not be. Heavens, on my way here, I bade good-by in my thought to my family, to

my past life, — and then, whom did I find here? A coward. . . . . How did you know I could not bear to part from my family? 'Your mother won't consent . . . . it is terrible!' That is all the answer you had! Was it you, was it really you, Roudine? No, farewell. . . . . Ah! if you loved me, I should feel it at this moment. . . . . No no; good-by!" . . . .

She turned away rapidly and ran to Macha, who for some time had been anxious, and making signs to bring her away.

"It is you who are afraid, and not I," cried Roudine, as he saw her run away.

But she paid no attention to him, and ran across the fields to the house.

She reached her room safely; but she had scarcely crossed the threshold when her strength abandoned her, and she sank fainting into Macha's arms.

Roudine lingered some time at the dike. Suddenly he braced himself and stepped slowly along the path which he had taken an hour before. He was extremely ashamed

of himself . . . . and exceedingly irritated. "What a girl she is!" he thought, ... "and only eighteen years old. . . . . No, I didn't know her . . . . an extraordinary girl. What a strong will! . . . . She is right; she is worthy of another love than that which I could feel for her. . . . . And did I feel it?" he asked himself. "Don't I love her any more? And must it all end thus? How piteous, how contemptible, I was in comparison with her!"

The rolling of a carriage caused Roudine to raise his head. It was Leschnieff coming in the opposite direction, driving his customary trotter. Roudine bowed to him silently; then, as if struck by a sudden thought, he turned to one side and walked rapidly towards Daria's house.

Leschnieff let him go on a short way, following him with his eyes, and then, after a moment of thought, he turned his horse and drove to Volinzoff's.

He found his friend asleep. He told the servant not to awaken him, and went on the piazza to smoke a pipe before breakfast.

XI.

VOLINZOFF got up at ten o'clock. On hearing to his great surprise that Leschnieff was seated on the piazza, he sent word for him to come in.

"What has happened?" he asked him. "You were going home, I thought."

"True; but I met Roudine. He was tramping alone through the fields, with a most agitated expression on his face. I thought it over for a moment and then came back."

"You came back because you met Roudine?"

"That is to say — to tell the truth — I don't know myself why I came back; probably because I thought of you. I wanted to sit with you again. I shall have time enough to go home."

Volinzoff smiled bitterly.

"Yes, one can't think of Roudine any longer without thinking of me. . . . . Bring us some tea!" he cried to a servant.

The friends sat down to breakfast. Leschnieff talked about farming and of a new way of lining barns.

Suddenly Volinzoff sprang from his chair, hitting the table so violently that all the cups and saucers rattled.

"No," he cried, "I can't stand this any longer. I shall call this genius out; either he will kill me, or I shall lodge a bullet in his intellectual brow."

"What's the matter now?" said Leschnieff coldly. "What makes you cry out in that way? You made me drop my pipe. . . . . What ails you?"

"Why, I can't hear his name mentioned without getting into a passion; all my blood flies to my head."

"Oh, nonsense, nonsense! aren't you ashamed of yourself?" answered Leschnieff, picking up his pipe. "Don't think of him any more. Let him go" —

"He has insulted me," continued Volinzoff, walking up and down the room. "Yes, he has insulted me grossly.

You must acknowledge it yourself. At first, I paid no attention to it myself; I was too much surprised, and, in fact, who could have expected it? I am going to show him I am not to be trifled with. Cursed philosopher! I'll shoot him like a partridge."

"A good deal you'll get by that! I won't speak of your sister; under the influence of such passion, how could you think of her? But with regard to another person, do you expect to advance your interests much by shooting the 'philosopher,' as you call him?"

Volinzoff flung himself into a chair.

"Then I shall go away. I don't care where, only away from here! My heart is so heavy that I can find no peace here."

"You want to go away? . . . . That is another matter. I agree with you there. And do you know what I propose? Let us leave together; let us go to the Caucasus or only to Little-Russia, and eat dumplings. That is a capital idea."

"Yes; but what shall I do with my sister?"

"And why should not Alexandra Paulovna go with us? Heavens, that would be delightful! I will take care of her. She shall want for nothing; if she cares for it, I'll see that she has a serenade beneath her window every evening; I'll perfume the postilions with Cologne water; I'll line the road with flowers. As for us, my brother, it will be as if we were born again; we will give ourselves wholly up to enjoyment, and we'll bring such fat paunches back with us that love will have no chance to touch us."

"You are always joking, Michael."

"I am not joking at all. That was a brilliant suggestion of yours."

"Don't let us talk of it any more," cried Volinzoff; "I want to fight him."

"Again? You've lost your wits to-day."

A servant entered with a letter.

"Who is it from?" asked Leschnieff.

"From Roudine — from Dimitri Nicolaïtch Roudine. It was brought by Madame Lassounski's servant."

"From Roudine?" repeated Volinzoff. 'For whom is it?"

"For you."

"For me! Hand it here."

Volinzoff seized the letter, tore it open and began to read it. Leschnieff watched him closely. A strange, almost joyous surprise appeared on Volinzoff's face. He let his arms drop by his side.

"What does he say?" asked Leschnieff.

"Read it," said Volinzoff faintly, handing him the letter.

Leschnieff began to read it. This is what Roudine had written: —

"Sir, — To-day I leave Daria Michaëlovna's house, and I leave never to return. This will probably surprise you, especially after my visit of yesterday. I cannot explain to you my motives for acting thus, but it seems to me that I ought to give you notice of my departure. You do not like me, and you consider me a worthless man. I have no intention of defending myself Time will do that. In my

opinion it is unworthy of a man, and at the same time useless for him to try to convince a prejudiced person of the groundlessness of his prejudices. Whoever is willing to understand me, will forgive me; as for any one who is neither willing nor able to understand me, his accusations are to me a matter of indifference. I have been deceived in you. In my eyes you will always be, as heretofore, a noble, honorable man. My error was in supposing that you could raise yourself above the circle in which you have been brought up. I was mistaken. But of what importance is that? It is neither the first nor the last time in my experience. I repeat it, I am going away; I wish you all possible happiness. Confess that this is a thoroughly disinterested wish. I cannot refrain from hoping that you will be happy henceforth. Perhaps time will alter your opinion of me.

"Whether we shall ever meet again, I do not know; but I still remain

"Your sincerely attached friend, D. Roudine.

"P. S. I will send you the two hundred rubles I owe

you, as soon as I reach my home in the Government of T——. Please do not mention this letter to Daria.

"P. P. S. A last, and important request. Since I leave at once, I trust that you will make no allusion to my call on you, in the presence of Natalie."

"Well, what do you say to that?" asked Volinzoff, when Leschnieff had finished the letter.

"What can one say?" answered Leschnieff. "The only thing one can do is to cry, 'Allah! Allah!' like a Mussulman, and put one's finger in his mouth as a sign of astonishment. He is going away — very well. May his path be smooth before him! It's curious to notice how duty alone induced him to write this letter, and it was from a feeling of duty that he called upon you. . . . . These gentlemen are always finding some duty to perform, some debt to discharge at every step," continued Leschnieff, pointing with a smile to the postscript of the letter.

"What phrases he invents!" cried Volinzoff. "He has been deceived in me; he expected to find me rise

superior to the circle in which I had been brought up. . . . . Heavens! What stuff and nonsense! it's worse than poetry!"

Leschnieff did not answer; in his eyes alone was a smile perceptible.

Volinzoff arose.

"I want to go to Daria Michaëlovna's," he said, "and see what it all means."

"Don't hurry, brother; give him time to get off. Why should you run across him again? He's going, you know. What more do you want? You'd better go to bed and get some sleep; I am sure you spent the whole night turning and tossing in bed from one side to the other. Now things are looking better." . . . .

"What makes you think so?"

"Oh, I think so. But go and get some sleep. I will go and sit with your sister."

"I don t want to sleep. Why should I? . . . . I would rather go out to the fields," added Volinzoff, smoothing his coat.

" Very well, my friend, go out to the fields ! "

And Leschnieff went to the other half of the house, to Alexandra Paulovna. He found her in her drawing-room. She greeted him kindly; she was always glad to see him, but to-day her face bore a sad expression. She was disturbed by Roudine's visit of the day before.

" Do you come from my brother ? " she asked Leschnieff. " How is he to-day ? "

" He is very well; he has gone out to the fields.'

Alexandra was silent.

" Tell me," she began, examining carefully the border of her handkerchief; " don't you know why " . . . .

" Why Roudine came ? " interrupted Leschnieff. " I know why; he came to bid good-by."

Alexandra raised her head.

" What ! To bid good-by ! "

" Yes; haven't you heard ? He is going away from Daria's."

" Going away ? "

" Forever — at least that's what he says."

"But what are we to think of that after all?" . . . .

"Ah, that is another question. We can't understand it, but that's the case. Something must have happened. He has probably stretched the cord too far, and it's broken."

"Michael!" answered Alexandra. "I don't understand you at all; it seems to me you are making fun of me."

"I swear I am not. . . . . I tell you he's going away, and he sends his friends word of this by letter. Regarded in a certain way, it is, if you choose, a fortunate thing; but his departure nevertheless prevents the carrying out of one of the most remarkable undertakings, which your brother and I were just discussing."

"What was this undertaking?"

"You shall hear. I proposed to your brother a journey for the sake of distraction, and to take you along. I said I should take it upon myself to care for you."

"That is delightful!" cried Alexandra. "I see what sort of care you would take of me. You would let me starve to death."

"You say that, Alexandra Paulovna, because you don't know me. You think I am a stock, a perfect stock, a sort of wooden man; but if you knew that I could melt like sugar and pass whole days on my knees!"

"I must say I should like to see that."

Leschnieff arose suddenly. "Well, marry me, Alexandra, and you will see it."

Alexandra blushed crimson.

"What did you say, Michael Michaëlovitch?" she said with embarrassment.

"I said," answered Leschnieff, "what has for a long time been on the tip of my tongue. I have now said it, and you can act on it as you please. In order not to embarrass you, I will go away. Yes, I'm going . . . . if you consent to be my wife . . . . if that is not disagreeable to you, send some one after me. I'll understand."

Alexandra wanted to detain Leschnieff, but he went quickly into the garden without his hat, and leaned on a little gate, letting his eyes wander in the distant prospect.

"If you please, sir," said a maid-servant behind him, "my mistress told me to ask you to come in."

Michael Michaëlovitch turned around, took hold of the girl's head, much to her astonishment, and kissed her forehead; then he entered the house.

XII.

When Roudine reached home after meeting Leschnieff, he locked himself up in his room and wrote two letters: the first to Volinzoff, which the reader has already seen the other to Natalie. Over this second letter he worked a long time; a great deal of it he scratched out and altered and when he had copied it on a sheet of his best letter-paper, he folded it into as small a compass as possible, and put it into his pocket. Having finished this task, he began to walk up and down his room with a gloomy expression on his face; then he sat down in a chair near the window, resting his chin upon his arm, while the rising tears quivered on his eyelids. Suddenly, and as if he had just formed a final resolution, he arose, buttoned his coat up to his neck, called his servant, and bade him ask Daria

Michaëlovna whether she could see him. The servant came back saying she was awaiting him. Roudine followed him. Daria received her guest in her boudoir, as on the day of his first appearance, two months before. But now with this difference, that she was not alone. Pandalewski, as modest, smug, and humble as ever, was with her.

Daria received Roudine graciously, and he, for his part, greeted her with apparent composure; but with the first glance at both of the smiling faces, any man who knew the world would have easily detected behind their polite and friendly manner genuine constraint and coldness. Roudine knew that Daria was offended at him, and she suspected that he already knew how she felt.

Pandalewski's report had angered her; it had touched her pride. Roudine, the poverty-stricken, humble-born, unknown Roudine, had had the presumption to have a secret interview with her daughter — the daughter of Daria Michaëlovna Lassounski!

"Even granting he's a clever man, a genius," she said

"what difference does that make? According to that, any one might hope to become my son-in-law."

"For a long time I could not believe my eyes," answered Pandalewski. "I could not comprehend that he did not understand either his position or yours."

Daria was very angry, and Natalie had to suffer from it.

She asked Roudine to sit down. He did so at once, but no longer like the Roudine of old times, when he was almost the master of the house. He did not even sit down like a mere acquaintance whom one is glad to see, but like a stranger who is paying a call of ceremony. This was merely the work of a moment, but no longer time is needed to change water into ice.

"I am come, Daria Michaëlovna," began Roudine, "to thank you for your hospitality. I have just received important news from my estate, and I must leave to-day."

Daria looked at Roudine attentively.

"He has got the start of me; he certainly suspects something," she thought, "and he wants to dispense with any

embarrassing explanation. So much the better. Long live the clever people!"

"Indeed?" she said aloud. "That is really very sad. But if you must .... I hope to see you this winter at Moscow. We shall be going back soon."

"I don't know when I shall be able to get to Moscow, Daria Michaëlovna; but if I find the means, I shall consider it my duty to call on you as soon as possible."

"Oh, ho, my friend!" said Pandalewski to himself, "it's not very long since you spoke like lord and master, and now you have to express yourself in this way."

"So the news you have received from your estate is not perfectly satisfactory?" he asked, with his usual affectation.

"No," answered Roudine, dryly.

"A bad harvest perhaps?"

"No .... something else..... Believe me, Daria Michaëlovna," continued Roudine, "I shall never forget the time I have spent in your house."

"And for my part, Dimitri Nicolaïtch, I shall always

recall our acquaintance with pleasure. . . . . When do you leave ? "

" To-day, after dinner."

" So soon? . . . . Well, I wish you a pleasant journey. If your business does not detain you too long, perhaps we may see you again here."

" That is hardly possible," answered Roudine, rising. " Excuse me," he added, " I can't at once pay the amount I owe you, but as soon as I have reached my estate " . . . .

" Don't let us speak of that, Dimitri Nicolaïtch," Daria broke in, " you would pain me. . . . . But what time is it ? " she asked.

Pandalewski drew from his waistcoat pocket a little enamelled watch, and carefully bending his rosy cheek over his white, stiff collar, he said, —

" Thirty-three minutes past two."

" It is time for me to dress," said Daria. " *Au revoir,* Dimitri Nicolaïtch."

This whole conversation between Daria and Roudine was peculiar. In the same way actors rehearse their

parts, and diplomats interchange their carefully prepared phrases.

Roudine went out. He now knew from experience how the worldly throw over people whom they can no longer use, or rather, how they drop them, like old gloves, or lottery-tickets that fail to win.

He packed up his things quickly and waited impatiently for the moment of departure. All the people of the house were much surprised when they heard of his sudden plan; even the servants looked at him coldly. The ingenuous Bassistoff could not hide his grief. It was evident that Natalie avoided Roudine. She even tried to keep out of his sight; but he succeeded in handing her his letter. At table Daria Michaëlovna again expressed her hope of seeing Roudine before she left for Moscow, but he made no reply. Pandalewski talked more with him than did any of the others, and Roudine more than once felt a longing to fall on him and slap his rosy cheeks. Miss Boncourt often glanced at Roudine with that very strange and crafty expression which may be seen on the face of pointers.

"Ha, ha!" she seemed to say, "so that is the way they treat you to-day."

At last six o'clock struck, and Roudine's carriage drove up to the door. He bade a hasty adieu to every one. He was very ill at ease. He had not expected to leave the house in this fashion; it seemed to him as if he were turned out of it. . . . . "What has happened? why need I hurry so? There must be an end to everything." Such were the thoughts which kept running through his head as with a forced smile he made his bow to them all. He cast one last look at Natalie, and his heart was moved within him. Her eyes were fastened upon him with a sad, reproachful expression.

He ran quickly down-stairs and sprang into his carriage. Bassistoff had offered to accompany him as far as the first station, and took his seat by his side.

"Do you remember," began Roudine, as soon as the carriage had rolled out of the court-yard into the broad highway, bordered by pines, "do you remember what Don Quixote said to his squire as he left the castle of the

duchess? 'Liberty, friend Sancho, is one of the choicest gifts that Heaven hath bestowed upon man. Happy is he to whom Heaven hath given a morsel of bread without laying him under an obligation to any but Heaven itself!' I now feel as Don Quixote felt then. . . . . May God grant, my dear Bassistoff, that you may never come to feel in this way!"

Bassistoff pressed Roudine's hand warmly, and his honest heart beat strongly within his breast. Until they reached the station Roudine talked about the dignity of men, of the meaning of real freedom; his words were warm, noble, and true; and when they were taking leave of one another Bassistoff could not help falling on his neck and sobbing. Roudine too shed a few tears, — but not on account of leaving Bassistoff. His tears were those of wounded self-love.

Natalie had gone to her room to read Roudine's letter.

"Dear Natalie," he wrote, "I have decided to go away. No other course was possible. I decided to go away before

I was openly ordered off. My departure will put an end to all misunderstandings, and no one will miss me. Why hesitate, then? . . . . All that is true, you will think, but why write to you?

"I am taking leave of you, probably forever, and I write because it is too bitter for me to think that I am leaving behind me a worse reputation than I deserve. I do not wish to justify myself, nor to accuse any one except myself; I only want to explain my conduct as much as possible. . . . . The events of the last few days were so unexpected, so sudden. . . . .

"To-day's interview with you will always serve me as a lesson. Yes, you are right; I thought I knew you, but I did not. In the course of my life I have met a great many women and young girls, but in you I found for the first time a really pure and honest soul. That was new to me, and I did not appreciate you. From the first day of our acquaintance I felt myself drawn towards you; you must have noticed it. I passed many hours with you, and I did not get to know you; nay, I did not even try to know

you . . . . and yet I imagined that I loved you. For this error I am now punished.

"Before this I loved a woman and was loved in return. . . . . My feeling for her was complex, like hers for me. Could it be otherwise, since hers was not a simple nature? The truth had not then manifested itself to me, and the day it appeared before me, I did not recognize it. . . . . Afterwards I recognized it, but it was too late. . . . . The past does not return. . . . . Our separate lives might have become one — and they are separated forever. How can I convince you that I could have loved you with true love when I do not even know whether I am capable of such love?

"Nature has been generous to me; I know it, and I will not assume airs of false modesty before you, especially now, in this hour, which is one of the bitterest and most humiliating of my life. . . . . Yes, nature has accorded me much, but I shall die without making any proper use of my gifts — without leaving a trace of any good done in my life here below.

"All my riches will have been wasted in vain; I shall never reap the fruit of my exertions. I lack . . . . I cannot myself say exactly what it is I lack — but it is probably that which is indispensable for moving the heart of men and winning that of a woman; and to rule over the intelligence alone is as uncertain as it is futile. My fate is a strange one, it is almost ridiculous. I should like to give myself up absolutely, without reserve, entirely, and yet I cannot give myself up. I shall end by sacrificing myself for some folly, in which I shall not believe. . . . . Heavens! Thirty-five years old, and still preparing for action!

"I have never before spoken so frankly to any one — this is my confession.

"But enough about myself; I want to speak about you, to give you some advice. That is all I am good for. . . . . You are still young; but, however long you live, never fail to follow the impulse of your heart; never let yourself be controlled by your own reason, nor by that of others. Believe me, the narrower and more monotonous the circle in which our life moves, the better it is; it is not for us to

seek new paths of existence, but to try to have all its phases accomplished in the right time. 'Happy he who is young in the time of his youth!' But I notice that this advice is more suitable for me than for you.

"I confess, Natalie, my heart is heavy. I was never mistaken with regard to the feeling which I inspired in Daria Michaëlovna; but I still hoped that I had found a brief refuge here. . . . . Now I must go out again into the world.

"What can replace for me your sweet voice, your presence, your attentive, intelligent face? . . . . The fault is mine; but acknowledge that fate has seemed to be jesting with us. Only a week ago I hardly suspected that I loved you. The other evening in the garden I for the first time heard from your lips . . . . but why recall what you said then? . . . . And now I am going away, covered with shame, humiliated, after a cruel explanation, without carrying the slightest hope. . . . . And yet you do not know how guilty I am towards you. . . . . I am so foolishly frank, so inclined to make a confidant of every

one. . . . . But why speak of that! I am going away forever."

(Roudine began to tell her about his visit to Volinzoff, but after a few moments of reflection he scratched the passage out and wrote the second postscript to the letter to Volinzoff.)

"I only remain in the world in order to give myself up to other occupations, to occupations more worthy of me, as you said this morning with a cruel smile. Alas! if I could but give myself up to them, if I could but overcome my indolence! No, I shall all my life be the incomplete being I now am. . . . . At the first obstacle, I shall crumble into dust. What has passed between us proves that. If I had at least sacrificed my love to my future activity, to my occupations; but no, I only hesitated before the responsibility I should have to assume, and the certainty that I was unworthy of you. I do not deserve that you should leave your sphere for me. . . . . Besides, all that has happened is doubtless for the best. This experience will leave me probably purer and stronger than before.

"I wish you every happiness. Farewell! Think of me sometimes. I hope that you will hear of me yet.

"ROUDINE."

Natalie let Roudine's letter fall into her lap, and sat for a long time motionless, staring at the floor. This letter convinced her more clearly than all possible testimony, how right she had been in her involuntary cry on leaving him that morning, that he did not love her. But this fact brought her no consolation. She sat without moving; it seemed to her as if dark, noiseless waves were closing over her head and she were gliding, cold and numb, to the bottom of an abyss. The first disappointment every one finds hard to bear, but it is almost crushing to a candid soul, which is unfamiliar with exaggeration and frivolity, and which is averse to deceiving itself. Natalie recalled her childhood, and thought of the evening walks she used to take. She always used to prefer going in the direction of the glowing sunset, and she instinctively turned her eyes away from the gloomy east. Now life stood dark before her; she had turned her back on the light. . . . .

Tears stood in Natalie's eyes. Tears are not always a relief. They are refreshing when, long restrained, they at last burst forth — at first, burning and bitter, then more abundant and readier. In this way the dull pang of grief is assuaged. . . . . But there are cold tears, which fall one by one, as if pressed from the heart by some heavy burden of sorrow. Such tears are unconsoling; they bring no relief. They are the tears of despair, and only he who has shed them has been unhappy. On that day Natalie learned to know them.

Two hours passed. Natalie calmed herself, arose, dried her eyes, and lit her lamp; then at the flame she set fire to Roudine's letter. When it was wholly burned she threw the ashes out of the window. Then she opened at random a volume of Pouchkine's poems, and read the first lines that met her eyes; she often consulted the book in this way. She came upon these words, —

"Whoever has felt deeply
Is incessantly pursued by the phantom
Of days irrevocably passed;

For him life has lost its charm;

He is gnawed by remorse for the past."

She remained standing a moment; she glanced with a cold smile at her image in the glass, bowed her head slowly, and went into the parlor.

As soon as Daria saw her, she asked her to her boudoir and made her sit down at her side. She caressed her cheeks kindly, and gazed at her eyes attentively, almost inquisitively. Daria was secretly perplexed. For the first time in her life it occurred to her that she did not understand her daughter's character. When she heard from Pandalewski of her daughter's meeting with Roudine, she was less angry than surprised that her sensible Natalie should have consented to take such a step. But when she summoned her and began to blame her, not like a woman of society, but with a very strident voice and vulgar manners, Natalie's firm answers and resolute air confused and almost intimidated her. Roudine's sudden and not perfectly explicable departure removed a great load from her heart; but she had expected tears and hysterics . . .

and Natalie's outward calm consequently led her into new misconceptions.

"Well, my child," began Daria, "how do you feel to-day?"

Natalie looked at her mother.

"He is gone — that gentleman. Do you know why he left so suddenly?"

"Mamma," answered Natalie calmly, "I give you my word that if you won't speak of him, you shall never hear me say a word about him."

"You see then how ill you treated me?"

Natalie bowed her head, and repeated, —

"You shall never hear me say a word about him."

"Very well," answered Daria, smiling, "I believe you. But do you remember the other day, how . . . . Well, we won't speak of that. That's all dead and buried and forgotten. Is it not? Now I recognize you once more. I was all in confusion. Well, kiss me, my dear, good child." . . .

Natalie raised Daria's hand to her lips, and Daria kissed her daughter's bowed head.

"Always listen to my advice, don't forget that you are a Lassounski and my daughter, and," she added, "you will be happy. Now you can go."

Natalie went out in silence. Daria looked at her and thought, "She's just what I used to be — she will let herself be carried away; but she has less enthusiasm than I had." And Daria buried herself in thoughts of the past — of a very distant past. Then she sent for Miss Boncourt, and sat conferring with her for a long time. After she was dismissed, she summoned Pandalewski. She wanted to find out the real reason of Roudine's departure. It may be readily understood that Pandalewski satisfied her completely. It was in his *rôle*.

The next day Volinzoff and his sister dined at Daria's. She had always been very kind to them, but that day she received them with exceptional warmth. Natalie was very melancholy. Volinzoff treated her, however, with such respect, he was so modest when he spoke to her, that she could not help being profoundly grateful to him.

The day was quiet and without incident; but they all

felt, when they separated, that they had fallen into the old path, and that is a great deal.

Yes, the old life had begun for all, except Natalie. When at last she was alone, she dragged herself to her bed, and, worn out, buried her head in the pillow.

Life seemed to her so bitter, so hollow; she was so ashamed of herself, of her love and her sufferings, that at that moment she would probably have been willing to die. . . . . Many sad days, many sleepless nights, many keen sufferings awaited her: but she was young; her life had but just begun, and sooner or later, life with its duties and distractions is sure to get the upper hand. Whatever blow may fall upon a human being, he cannot help — reader, forgive the brutality of the phrase — he cannot help eating on that day or the next, and that is the first consolation. Natalie's sufferings were bitter; she suffered for the first time. . . . . But neither the first sufferings nor the first love can be repeated — and for that we ought to thank God.

XIII.

About two years have passed. It is the beginning of May. Alexandra Paulovna, no longer Lipina, but Leschnieff, is sitting on the balcony. It is more than a year since she married Michael Michaëlovitch. She is as charming as ever, only she has become a little stouter. The balcony is connected by a few steps with the garden, in which a nurse is carrying in her arms a little pink-cheeked baby, clad in a white dress and a white-fringed cap. Alexandra is watching them attentively. The baby is not crying, but gravely sucking its thumb and looking about quietly. It shows itself already to be the son of Michael Michaëlovitch.

Our old acquaintance Pigasoff is sitting on the balcony at Alexandra's side. Since we last met him he has grown

grayer and thinner. His shoulders are bent, and he lisps, owing to the loss of a tooth. This lisp adds to the bitterness of his remarks. His extreme irritability has not diminished with age, but his wit is less cutting, and he has become prone to repeat himself. Michael is not at home; they are awaiting his return before taking tea. The sun has already set. As it disappeared it left behind a long, light, gold-colored glow in the west, while in the east are two lines of different hues, the lower somewhat blue, the other, reddish violet. Light clouds are gathering in the zenith. Everything seems to promise pleasant weather.

Pigasoff suddenly began to laugh.

"What are you laughing at, Africanus?" asked Alexandra Paulovna.

"Oh, nothing; it occurred to me .... yesterday I heard a peasant say to his wife, who had begun to talk too much, 'Don't creak so!' That word 'creak' pleased me. And can a woman talk? You know I always except the present company. Our fathers were wiser than we. In

their stories a young girl is always represented sitting at a window, with a star on her forehead, and as dumb as a fish. That's the way it ought to be. Judge for yourself. Day before yesterday the wife of the marshal of the district — it came at me like a pistol-shot — said to me that she did not like my *tendencies*. My tendencies! Would it not be better, I ask you, for a beneficent interposition of nature to deprive this lady and all her sisters of the use of language?"

"You are always the same, Africanus; you are always attacking us poor, helpless women. Really, I pity you for this prejudice. It's a real misfortune."

"Misfortune! What do you mean? In the first place, I think there are only three misfortunes in the world, namely, living in a cold room in winter, wearing tight shoes in summer, and sleeping in the same room with a crying child which one can't whip. Besides, haven't I become one of the most peaceful men in the world? I have become a most moral man, an example for the whole world! My conduct is most upright."

"Ah, indeed; so you conduct yourself well! Why then did Ellen Antovna come yesterday to complain of you?"

"Oh, ho! what did she say, if you please?"

"She said that the whole morning the only answer you had made to her questions was 'Wh-at? wh-at?' and that with a whimpering voice."

Pigasoff began to laugh.

"You must confess that was a good idea, Alexandra Paulovna . . . . what?"

"Oh, a capital idea! How can you be so impolite to a woman?"

"What? Do you consider Ellen Antovna a woman?"

"What do you consider her?"

"A drum, a real drum, to be beaten with sticks." . . . .

"Oh, my friend," interrupted Alexandra Paulovna, anxious to change the conversation, "it appears you are to be congratulated."

"On what?"

"On the settling of your lawsuit. The Glinow meadows are yours."

"They are mine," answered Pigasoff, gloomily.

"You have been fighting for several years, and now you don't seem pleased."

"I must say, Alexandra Paulovna," said Pigasoff, slowly, "there is nothing more disagreeable in the world than a piece of good fortune which comes too late. It can't give you any pleasure, and it deprives you of the right, which is so precious, of abusing your fate. Yes, I repeat it, a tardy good fortune is a bitter and insulting jest."

Alexandra merely shrugged her shoulders.

"Nurse," she cried, "I think it's time to put Micha to bed. Bring him here."

Alexandra busied herself with the boy, while Pigasoff went off grumbling to the other end of the piazza.

Suddenly Michael Michaëlovitch's droschke appeared at the end of the carriage-way which skirted the garden. Two enormous watch-dogs, one gray, the other yellow, ran before the horse; he had recently bought them. They were the best of friends, and were biting one another from morning till night. An old terrier ran to the gate to

meet them, and opened his mouth as if to bark, but he only gaped and turned back, wagging his tail.

"Sacha, guess whom I have brought you," cried Leschnieff, from afar.

Alexandra Paulovna did not at first recognize the person who was sitting behind her husband.

"Ah! Mr. Bassistoff!" she said, at last.

"Himself," answered Leschnieff, "and he brings good news; you shall hear it in a moment;" and he drove into the court.

A few minutes after, he appeared on the balcony with Bassistoff.

"Hurrah!" he cried as he embraced her, "Sergius is going to be married."

"To whom?"

"To Natalie, of course. . . . . Our friend here brought the news from Moscow; he has a letter to you. . . . . Do you hear, Micha?" he continued, seizing Micha's hands "Your uncle is going to be married. What composure He only winks his eyes at the news."

"He is sleepy," said the nurse.

"Yes," said Bassistoff, approaching Alexandra, "I have just arrived to-day from Moscow. Daria sent me on business, to arrange the accounts. Here is the letter."

Alexandra hastily opened her brother's letter. It was only a few lines, written in the first outburst of joy. Volinzoff told his sister that he had proposed to Natalie, and that he had her consent and that of her mother. He promised to write more at length by the next post, and, meanwhile, he embraced and kissed them all in thought. He evidently wrote in a whirl of excitement.

Tea was brought. Bassistoff was given a seat. They plied him with questions. All, even including Pigasoff, were rejoiced at the news the young man had brought.

"Tell me, please," said Leschnieff in the course of the conversation, "we heard some rumors about a certain Mr. Kartchagine; was there any foundation for them?"

This Kartchagine, of whom we have hitherto made no mention, was a good-looking young man, a dandy, very pompous and self-satisfied. He tried to give himself digni-

fied airs, as if he were not a human being, but his own statue erected by national subscription.

"There was some foundation," answered Bassistoff, with a smile. "Daria Michaëlovna was well disposed towards him; but Natalie would have nothing to do with him."

"I know him," interrupted Pigasoff. "He's a perfect booby, a thorough blockhead. Dear me! If everybody was like him, one would have to be paid dear to consent to live."

"I don't contradict you," answered Bassistoff, "although he has a very high position in the world."

"Well, it's all the same to us," cried Alexandra Pau lovna. "Don't let us talk about him! Oh, how glad I am for my brother! . . . . And Natalie is happy?"

"Yes. She is as quiet as ever — you know her — but she seems happy."

The evening passed with pleasant conversation. Supper was brought.

"By the way," said Leschnieff to Bassistoff, pouring him

out some claret, "do you know what has become of Roudine?"

"Where he is just now, I don't know. Last winter he was at Moscow for a short time, and then he went to Simbirsk with a family. He and I corresponded for a short time. In his last letter he said he was going to leave Simbirsk, without saying where he was going. Since then I have not heard from him."

"He won't get lost," said Pigasoff. "He's preaching somewhere or other. That gentleman will always have two or three admirers who will listen to him open-mouthed, and whose money he will borrow. Take my word, his end will be that he'll die, either in prison or in exile in the home of some old maid with false hair, who will consider him one of the greatest geniuses in the world."

"You judge him very mercilessly," muttered Bassistoff, evidently displeased.

"Mercilessly! not at all," answered Pigasoff, "but justly. In my opinion he's nothing but a parasite. I had forgotten to tell you," he continued, turning to Leschnieff,

"that I met that Terlasoff with whom Roudine travelled abroad. You can form no idea of all he told me about him — it's really too absurd! It's a singular fact that all Roudine's friends and admirers in course of time become his enemies."

"I beg you will not include me among such friends!" cried Bassistoff, excitedly.

"You . . . . that's a different thing. I did not refer to you."

"What did Terlasoff tell you?" asked Alexandra.

"A number of stories. I can't remember them all; but this is one of the best. It seems that being incessantly occupied with his development, he came to the convictior, by means of philosophy, that he ought to fall in love. So he began to seek an object worthy of justifying such a wonderful conclusion. At last fortune smiled upon him. He made the acquaintance of a French woman, a lovely dressmaker. Observe that this took place in Germany, on the banks of the Rhine. He began by making her a few visits, then he lent her some books, and began to talk

to her about nature and Hegel. Do you picture the position of the unfortunate dressmaker? She took him for an astronomer. His personal appearance pleased her, as you may imagine; besides, he was a foreigner — a Russian: how could her heart help being touched? After endless hesitation he agreed on a rendezvous, a very poetical rendezvous, with her; he proposed a sail on the Rhine. The Frenchwoman consents; she puts on her most becoming dress, and they set off. They sail for about three hours. And what do you think he was doing all the time? He smoothed her hair, he gazed dreamily at the sky, and repeated frequently that he felt towards his mistress like a *father*. She reached home in a rage, and afterwards told it all to Terlasoff. That's the sort of man Roudine was!"

And Pigasoff burst out laughing.

"You are an old cynic!" said Alexandra, in a tone of vexation, "but I am sure that even those who most dislike Roudine cannot find anything dishonorable to say about him."

"Nothing dishonorable! And his way of always living at other people's expense, and his borrowing . . . . I'd be willing to bet he has borrowed money from you, Michael Michaëlovitch."

"Listen to me, Africanus Simeonovitch," began Leschnieff, while his face assumed a serious expression; "you know, and my wife knows too, that lately I have had no special fondness for Roudine: on the contrary, very often I have judged him severely. In spite of that" (Leschnieff filled his glass with champagne), "I propose this; we have just drunk the health of your brother, Alexandra, and of Natalie; well, now let us drink to the health of Dimitri Roudine!"

Alexandra and Pigasoff gazed at Leschnieff with astonishment, but Bassistoff flushed with pleasure and opened his eyes wide.

"I know him well," continued Leschnieff, "and I know his faults only too well. They are so much the greater, because Roudine is not a petty man."

"Roudine is a man of genius," interposed Bassistoff.

"He may have genius," answered Leschnieff, "I won't deny it; but the trouble is, he has no character. I don't want to speak of that, but rather of what is good and unusual in him. He is full of enthusiasm, and you can believe a phlegmatic man like me when I say that it is a most precious quality, especially in a time like the present. We are all unendurably cold-blooded, indifferent, and apathetic; we are indolent and unenergetic; hence we ought to be grateful to any one who can arouse and animate us, even for a moment, for we need a spur. You remember, Sacha, that once when I was talking about Roudine I accused him of coldness. I was both just and unjust. His coldness is in his blood — he's not to blame for it — not in his head. I was wrong in calling him an actor; he is no swindle, no cheat; he does not live on other people like a parasite, but like a child. . . . . Yes, he may die in loneliness and misery, but should we throw stones at him on that account? He will never accomplish anything, because he lacks energy and a strong will, but who can say that he never has done, or never will do, any good? that his words have never sown

good seed in some young heart, to which nature has no denied the force to carry out what it has conceived? I have felt it all in myself. . . . . Sacha knows what Roudine was to me when I was young. I remember that I said that Roudine's words could have no influence on his equals; but I meant by that those men who, like me, have reached an age when they are less susceptible, who have had experience of life, and whose reason has become hard to satisfy. There comes a time in life when a single false note destroys the harmony of the most beautiful piece of music, but fortunately the ear of the young is less delicate and less surfeited. So long as the idea is noble, what does it care for the tone? Youth finds that in itself."

"Bravo, bravo!" cried Bassistoff. "That's treating him with justice! As to Roudine's influence, I assure you he not only has the power of moving you, but he spurs you on, he prevents your tarrying by the way, he turns you upside down, he kindles a fire of enthusiasm within you!"

"You see?" Leschnieff continued, turning to Pigasoff

"What further proof do you need? You ridicule philosophy; no words are too harsh for it. I value it very little, and understand it perhaps less, but it is not from philosophy that our greatest misfortunes proceed. Philosophical hair-splitting and revery will never have much influence over the Russian; he has too much common sense. Still we ought not to make use of philosophy as a pretext to attack every honest aspiration after science and truth. It is Roudine's misfortune that he does not understand Russia, and certainly it is a great misfortune for him. Our country can get along without each one of us, but none of us can get along without our country. It is sad for him who thinks he can, and doubly sad for him who really does forget the manners and ideas of his country. Cosmopolitanism is nonsense, a zero, a less than zero; outside of nationality there is no art, no truth, no life, there is nothing at all. Every ideal figure ought to represent a type, at the risk of at once becoming insignificant and vulgar. But, I repeat it, it is not Roudine's fault, it is his fate, — his sad, bitter fate, — and we cannot throw the re-

sponsibility on him. It would carry us too far to try to ascertain why men like Roudine are so common in Russia. Let us rather be grateful for the good which there is in him. This is better than to be unjust towards him, and we have been unjust. It is not for us to punish him because he is no better, and this punishment is not necessary; he has punished himself more severely than he deserves. . . . . God grant that misfortune may rid him of all his bad qualities, and leave in him only what is noble! I drink the health of Roudine! I drink the health of the companion of my best days; I drink to youth, its hopes, its aspirations, its blind confidence, its honesty, in a word, to all which set our hearts a-beating when we were twenty! We know nothing better in life, nor shall we ever. I drink to it, that golden time! I drink Roudine's health!"

They all touched glasses with Leschnieff. Bassistoff in his enthusiasm nearly broke his glass, which he emptied at one draught, while Alexandra pressed her husband's hand.

"I had no idea you were so eloquent, Mr. Leschnieff,"

murmured Pigasoff; "that was worthy of Roudine. I must confess I am really affected."

"I am not a bit eloquent," answered Leschnieff, somewhat piqued, "still, to move you is somewhat difficult, I believe. But enough about Roudine; let us talk of something else. . . . . Is that . . . . what's his name? . . . . Pandalewski still living at Daria Michaëlovna's?" he asked, turning to Bassistoff.

"Of course, he is still there. She has given him a very good position."

Leschnieff smiled.

"One can safely bet that he will never fall into distress."

The supper ended. The guests separated. When Alexandra was left alone with her husband, she gazed at him affectionately.

"How good you were to-day, Michael," she said, gently stroking his brow; "how well, how nobly you spoke! But confess you defended Roudine with a little exaggeration, just as you used to attack him too harshly."

"One doesn't strike a man who's down . . . . and besides, I was then afraid he might turn your head," he added, smiling.

"No," answered Alexandra frankly, "he always seemed too learned for me; I was afraid of him, and did not know what I should say when he was present. But don't you think Pigasoff attacked him too maliciously this evening?"

"Pigasoff?" said Leschnieff. "That's just the reason I defended him so warmly, because Pigasoff was there. He presumes to call him a parasite! In my opinion Pigasoff's conduct is a hundred times worse. He has an independence, he is always attacking everybody, yet in spite of his pretended misanthropy he understands very well how to fasten himself on rich and distinguished people. Do you know that this Pigasoff, who attacks his equals so bitterly, and who is forever attacking philosophy and women, — do you know that when he was in the government service he used to take bribes, and large ones too?"

"Is it possible?" cried Alexandra Paulovna. "I never should have thought it .... Micha!" she added after a moment's silence, "I want to ask you something."

"What is it?"

"Do you think my brother will be happy with Natalie?"

"How can I say? .... from all appearance, yes .... she will have the upper hand — we need make no secret of that between ourselves — she's cleverer than he; but he is an excellent fellow and loves her with all his heart. What more would you want! We love one another and are happy, are we not?"

Alexandra smiled and pressed Michael's hand.

On that very day, while what we have just narrated was taking place at the house of Alexandra, a wretched kibitka,[1] covered with rushes and drawn by three peasant horses, was creeping slowly along the high-road of one of the remotest districts of Russia. A gray-haired peasant, clad in a long peasant's coat, was driving, seated

[1] A sort of covered carriage. — TR.

on the front seat, with his feet resting on the shafts. He did nothing but shake the reins and brandish his whip. Inside the kibitka a tall man was sitting on a shabby valise. He wore a cap; his coat was old and covered with dust. It was Roudine. He sat with his head cast down, and his cap overhanging his eyes. The jolting of the carriage threw him from side to side; but he seemed insensible to these discomforts, as if he were half asleep. "When shall we reach the next station?" he asked of the driver.

"Soon, very soon," answered the peasant, drawing the reins more strongly, "when we've got to the top of that hill, we have only two versts to go. . . . . Come, get up . . . . are you dreaming? I'll teach you how to go to sleep," he added, beating the off horse with his whip.

"You get over the ground very slowly, it seems to me,' remarked Roudine; "we've been crawling along all morning without getting on. Can't you sing me a song?"

"How can I help it? You see the horses are half starved . . . . and then it's so hot. Why do you ask me

to sing? I'm not a postilion. . . . . Hi, there!" he cried suddenly to a passer-by, who was wearing a sort of brown coat, and worn-out shoes, "hi, there! get out of the way!"

"You are a good driver!" murmured the tramp, who stopped. "Wretched Muscovite!" he continued with an insulting air as he started on.

"Where are you going?" the driver cried, tugging at the reins, "you cursed brute, where are you going?"

At last the tired horses reached the station. Roudino got out of the kibitka, paid the driver, who did not thank him, but for a long time turned the money over in his hand — he had probably expected a more generous sum for himself — while the traveller with his own hands carried his valise into the waiting-room.

One of my acquaintances who has travelled a great deal in Russia has told me that if the walls of the waiting-room at the post-stations were decorated with pictures representing scenes from Pouchkine's "Prisoners in the Caucasus," or Russian journals, the traveller might hope to get horses without delay, but if the pictures represented the life of

the celebrated gambler, Georges de Germany, the chances of leaving the place speedily were small. In such cases the traveller has plenty of time to admire at his leisure the powdered wig, the white waistcoat with broad facings, and the extraordinarily tight and short trousers of the gambler in his youth, or to study his face in delirium at the moment when, an old man, living in a hut with a sloping roof, he kills his own son by beating him on the head with a chair. Roudine had entered a room which was adorned with these pictures illustrating "Thirty Years, or the Gambler's Life." Roudine's shouts soon brought the sleepy keeper of the station to him — was one ever seen who was not sleepy? Without awaiting Roudine's question, he said at once, slowly, that he had no horses.

"How can you tell me you have no horses without my telling you in what direction I am going? I came here with a peasant's horses."

"We haven't a single horse," continued the keeper. "Where are you going?"

"To ——sk."

"There are no horses," he repeated, leaving the room.

Roudine stepped angrily to the window and threw his cap on the table. In two years, without changing much, he had grown older; a few silver lines glistened in his hair, and his eyes, though still handsome, seemed less brilliant; fine wrinkles, the marks of restless and bitter thought, appeared around his lips, his eyes, and his temples. His clothes were old and shabby, and no trace of linen was to be seen. His best days were over, and, as the gardeners say, he had gone to seed.

Roudine began to read the scribblings on the walls .... a favorite distraction of bored travellers. .... Suddenly the door creaked on its hinges and the station-master entered.

"There are no horses for ——sk," he said, "and there won't be any for a long time; but there are some returning to ——off."

"To ——off!" answered Roudine, "but I am not going in that direction. I am going to Pensa. It seems to me ——off lies towards Tamboff."

"What difference does it make? You can go from Tamboff, or, if you want to, you can return here from ——off."

Roudine thought for a moment.

"Well, I don't care," he said at last. "Have the horses harnessed. It's all the same to me. I'll go to Tamboff."

The horses were soon ready. Roudine carried down his valise, got into the kibitka, and sat down with drooping head as before. There was helplessness and sad resignation in this position. . . . . And the three horses fell into a gentle trot with a monotonous clatter along the road.

EPILOGUE.

AGAIN several years have passed. On a cold autumn day a travelling carriage stopped before the entrance of the principal hotel in the government of C——. From it descended a gentleman, puffing and stretching himself. He was not old, but he had already attained that portliness which is commonly called respectable. He walked rather quickly up one flight of stairs and stopped at the entrance of a broad corridor, and since he did not see any one, he called aloud for a room. A door opened slowly, a tall servant sprang out and ran hastily along to show the stranger his way. In the darkness he was only to be recognized by the shininess of the well-worn elbows of his coat.

Having reached his room, the stranger took off his overcoat and wraps, sat down on a sofa, placed his hands on

his knees, looked about him as if he had just waked up, and told the waiter to send his servant to him. The waiter bowed and went out. This traveller was no other than Leschnieff. He had been obliged to leave his estate and come to C—— in order to enroll recruits.

Leschnieff's servant, a young, curly-haired, red-cheeked lad, wearing felt boots and a long coat fastened around the waist by a blue girdle, entered the room.

"Well, my boy, we've reached here at last," said Leschnieff, "in spite of your fear that the tire would fall off the wheels."

"Yes, yes," answered the young man, trying to smile behind his turned-up coat-collar; "but why the tire didn't fall off, I" . . . .

"Isn't there any one here?" some one in the corridor cried.

Leschnieff started and listened.

"I say, somebody!" repeated the voice.

Leschnieff arose, went to the door, and opened it suddenly.

Before him stood a tall man, very much bowed; his hair was almost perfectly white. He wore an old cotton-velvet overcoat with brass buttons. Leschnieff recognized him at once.

"Roudine!" he said with emotion.

Roudine turned around. He could not distinguish Leschnieff's face, who was standing with his back to the light, and he looked at him inquiringly.

"Don't you remember me?" asked Leschnieff.

"Michael Michaëlovitch!" cried Roudine, holding out his hand, but he became embarrassed, and drew it back.

Leschnieff seized it with both hands.

"Come in here," he said, leading Roudine into his room. "How you've changed!" he added, after a moment of silence, and involuntarily dropping his voice.

"So they tell me," answered Roudine, looking gloomily around the room. "Time . . . . but you, you are exactly the same. How is Alexandra . . . . I mean your wife?"

"Thanks, very well. What chance brings you here?"

"Me? Oh, that's a long story. In fact it's the merest

chance that I am here. I am looking for a friend of mine. But I am very glad indeed" . . . .

"Where shall you dine?"

"I? I don't know. In some inn. I must go on to-day."

"You must?"

Roudine smiled meaningly.

"Yes, I must. I have been sent away to live on my own estate."

"Dine with me."

Roudine looked straight into Leschnieff's eyes for the first time.

"You ask me to dine with you?" he said.

"Yes, Roudine, in the old way, as old friends. Will you? I did not expect to meet you, and God knows whether we shall ever meet again. We can't part in this way."

"Very well, I accept gladly."

Leschnieff pressed Roudine's hand, called the waiter, ordered the dinner, and told him to put a bottle of champagne on ice.

As if they did it by agreement, Leschnieff and Roudine talked during the dinner of nothing but their student life. They revived many memories, and talked of many friends, living and dead. At first Roudine was very quiet, but after he had drunk a few glasses of wine he warmed up. At last the waiter removed the last plate; Leschnieff arose, bolted the door, and sat down again at the table, opposite Roudine, resting his chin on both hands.

"Now then," he began, "you must tell me everything that has happened to you since we last met."

Roudine threw a hasty glance at Leschnieff.

"My God," thought Leschnieff again, "how the poor fellow is altered!"

It was not so much his features that had changed, as his expression. Indeed, since the day we met him at the station asking for horses to continue his journey, his features had not perceptibly altered, although a slight examination would have detected the traces of the approach of old age. The eyes had another look. His motions, at one moment sluggish, at the next, inexplicably sudden, his

drawling voice — in a word, his whole appearance — gave evidence of a profound weariness, a secret sadness. This deep gloom was very different from that half-affected melancholy which he used to exhibit like many young people, who are none the less puffed up with vanity and self-confidence.

"It would be impossible," he answered, "to tell you everything that has happened, and besides it would not be worth while. I have had a great many troubles, and it's not my body alone which has been through a great deal; it's my soul too. How many disenchantments I have known. My God! How many people I've known intimately! . . . . Yes, how many!" repeated Roudine, noticing that Leschnieff was looking at him with unwonted sympathy. "How often my own words have sickened me — not merely from my own lips, but when uttered by those who shared my views! What transitions I have known, from the impatience and sensitiveness of a child to the stupid indifference of a horse which does not stir beneath his master's lash! How often I have hoped in vain

and then hated in vain! fought and humiliated myself! How often I've opened my wings like a falcon, — only to fall to the ground, to creep there, like a snail with a broken shell! Where have I not been! what ways does my foot not know! And there are some ways which are very dirty!" added Roudine, turning aside.

"You know," he continued . . . .

"One moment," interrupted Leschnieff. "Once we said 'thou' to one another; art thou willing to do so again? Let us drink to the 'thou'!"

Roudine started, straightened himself, and in his eyes flashed a hasty flame which no words can describe.

"Let us drink to it, brother! Thanks, brother, let us drink to it!"

Leschnieff and Roudine emptied their glasses.

"Thou knowest," began Roudine again, accenting the "thou," and smiling, "I carry at my heart a gnawing worm which will give me no peace till my dying day. It drives me to try to get influence over men and women at first they are impressed by me, but afterwards" . . . .

Roudine made a deprecating gesture with his hand.

"Since I left you . . . . thee, I have learned much, I have seen much. . . . . Many times I have begun a new life, after I have set my hand to some new work — and you can see how far I've got."

"Thou hadst no perseverance," murmured Leschnieff, as if he were speaking to himself.

"As thou sayest, I had not perseverance. I have never been able to build up anything, and, brother, it is not easy to build, when the ground is slipping away from under one's feet. I will not tell thee all my adventures, or rather all my discomfitures. I will only tell thee three or four incidents of my life when fortune seemed about to favor me, that is to say, when I began to hope for success, which is not quite the same thing." . . . .

Roudine thrust back his white and now somewhat thinner hair with the same motion of the hand with which he used to press back his thick, black locks.

"Well, listen," he began. "In Moscow I met a rather eccentric man. He was very rich and owned large estates;

he was not in the government service. His chief, his only passion was love of science, of science in general. I can't understand to this day how this passion took possession of him. It fitted him as a saddle does a cow. He made every exertion to keep himself on what is called an intellectual plane, although he was hardly able to express himself; he used to roll his eyes and bow his head when anything was said in his presence. I have never met a more meagrely endowed, a less intellectual nature than his. He reminded me of those broad stretches in the government of Smolensk, where there is nothing but sand, only here and there a tuft of grass which no animal can eat. Nothing succeeded in his hands; everything seemed to turn against him. He had the mania of making easy things hard. If it had depended on him, he would have made every one walk on his head. He worked, read, and wrote incessantly. He studied with a certain obstinate persistency and unlimited patience. His ambition was unnaturally great, and his character of iron. He lived alone, and was thought to be very eccentric. I made his

acquaintance and he liked me. I must say I soon read him, but his zeal touched me. Then he had so large a fortune, so much good, so much of real value might be done by him . . . . I went to live with him, and later accompanied him to his place in the country. My plans were immense, my friend; I dreamed of improvements, innovations" . . . .

"As you did at the Lassounski's, do you remember?" interrupted Leschnieff, with a gentle smile.

"Not at all. There I knew my words were thrown away, but here . . . . here was an entirely different field open before me. . . . . I collected books on farming . . . . I confess I could not finish one of them . . . . and then I set to work. At first it didn't go as I had expected, then things took a better turn. My new friend did not say a word; he only looked on without interfering; that is to say, up to a certain point he did not interfere; he adopted my plans, carried them out, but obstinately, rigidly, and with a secret mistrust he tried to put in some ideas of his own without my knowing it. He had

a very high opinion of the least of his ideas, and clung to it obstinately, like a lady-bird on a blade of grass, apparently stretching its wings to fly away, and then suddenly falling down and creeping slowly up again. . . . . Don't be surprised at all these comparisons; they all occurred to me at that time. Such were my occupations for two years. In spite of all my care, the result belied my expectations. I began to grow tired, my friend bored me, and I weighed on him like lead. His lack of confidence changed into ill-concealed dislike; an evil spirit took possession of us both; we couldn't talk together about anything; quietly, but incessantly, he tried to show me that he was not under my influence; my arrangements were either changed or wholly set aside. . . . . At last I saw I was merely an intelligent parasite in his house, paying for his hospitality with good words. I served the wealthy land-owner as an aid in intellectual gymnastics. It was painful for me to waste in vain my time and strength, still more painful to see my hopes continually deceived. I knew very well how much I should lose if I went away, but I could not control

myself, and one day, after a brutal scene at which I had been present, and which showed my friend in really too unfavorable a light, I broke with him entirely and went away, bidding good-by to my aristocratic pedant, that singular mixture of Cossack savageness and German sensitiveness" . . . .

"That is to say, thou didst throw away thy daily bread," cried Leschnieff, placing his hands on Roudine's shoulders.

"Yes, and stood again in the world naked and unencumbered. Fly now whither thou wilt. . . . . Come, let us drink!"

"To thy health!" said Leschnieff, rising and embracing Roudine. "To thy health and the memory of Pokorsky! . . . . He too knew how to remain poor."

"That was adventure number one," said Roudine, after a short pause. "Shall I go on?"

"Yes, go on, please."

"I really don't feel like talking; I am very tired, my friend . . . . but if thou wishest it. After I'd roamed

about from place to place . . . . I might tell you, by the way, how I became secretary of a high official, and how that came to an end, but it would take too much time — after roaming about a long time, I determined to become . . . . pray don't laugh . . . . to become a business man, a practical man. A favorable opportunity presented itself; I met a certain . . . . perhaps thou hast heard of him ? . . . . a certain Kurbéeff." . . . .

"I have never heard the name. But excuse me, Roudine, how was it that with thy intelligence thou didst not see it was not — forgive the pun — thy business to become a business man ?"

"I know very well, my friend, that it was not in my line ; but what else is ? . . . . If thou hadst only seen Kurbéeff! Don't think he was an empty braggart, like so many others ! They used to say that I was eloquent, but in comparison with him I could hardly stammer. He was a remarkably widely-informed, well-read man ; he had a really creative mind, a head for all sorts of manufacturing and commercial affairs. The boldest, most surprising plans

were always springing up in his mind. We met and resolved to devote ourselves to some undertaking for the benefit of the public." . . . .

"I wonder what it was."

Roudine cast down his eyes.

"Thou wilt have to laugh!"

"Why? No, I shan't laugh."

"We determined to make one of the rivers in the government of K—— navigable," said Roudine, with a forced smile.

"Is that all? So Kurbéeff was a capitalist?"

"He was poorer than I," answered Roudine, still bowing his white head.

Leschnieff burst out laughing, but stopped suddenly and grasped Roudine's hand.

"Forgive me, brother, please," he said, "I did not expect that at all. Well, did your undertaking remain on paper?"

"Not entirely. A beginning was made. We engaged workmen . . . . and set to work. We encountered all

sorts of obstacles. In the first place, there was a mill-owner, who wouldn't understand us: then, we found the water could not be directed without engines; and how were we to get money for the engines? We slept in huts for six months. Kurbéeff ate nothing but bread, and I fared no better. Still, I don't complain, for the country there is very beautiful. We made every effort to interest merchants; we sent out letters and circulars. The end of it all was, that I spent my very last penny in the project."

"Well," said Leschnieff, "I fancy it was not hard to get to thy last penny."

"No, indeed. But I can assure thee it was not a bad idea we had, and it might have brought us immense profits."

"What has become of this Kurbéeff?" asked Leschnieff.

"Of him? He is now in Siberia, digging for gold But I'm sure he'll make his fortune some time or other."

"I hope so; but it's just as sure that thou wilt always remain poor."

"I? what of that? Besides, I know that in thy eyes I am a very worthless man."

"Thou? Nonsense, brother. There was a time, it is true, when I saw only the dark sides of thy character; but now, believe me, I begin to appreciate thee more justly. Thou canst not make money . . . . but for that reason I love thee." . . . .

Roudine smiled faintly.

"Really?"

"Yes, really. I respect thee more. Dost thou understand me?"

They both were silent.

"Well, shall I tell thee number three?"

"Be so kind."

"This is the third and last. But am I not boring you?'

"Go on, go on!"

"Well, once in a leisure moment (I always had plenty of leisure), an idea occurred to me. I said to myself, 'I know enough, and I have high aims.' . . . . Thou wilt not deny that I have always had lofty aims?"

"Far from it."

"All my other plans had failed. . . . . I asked myself why I should not become a teacher. At any rate, it would be better than doing nothing at all."

Roudine stopped and sighed.

"Why live without doing anything? Would it not be better to try to communicate what I know to others; perhaps from me they may get something of profit for themselves. My talents are at least not mediocre. I have a certain ease in speaking. . . . . So I determined to devote myself to this new occupation. I had great trouble in getting a place; I did not want to give private lessons, and I could find no suitable place in the primary schools. Finally, I got an opportunity as professor in the Gymnasium in this city."

"Professor of what?' asked Leschnieff.

"Of Russian literature. I must say I never devoted myself so ardently to anything. The idea of influencing the young men inspired me. I spent three weeks preparing for my first lecture."

"Is it with thee?" interrupted Leschnieff.

"No, I have lost it, I don't know where. It had a tolerable success and was applauded. I can still see the faces of my hearers, — those handsome young faces with an expression of sincere attention, sympathy, yes, even of surprise. I took my place in a sort of fever; I read my lecture: I thought it would fill an hour, but I finished it in twenty minutes. The inspector — a dry old man with silver eye-glasses and a little wig — would nod his head approvingly every few minutes. When I had finished and had come down from the platform, he said, 'That was very good, sir, but a little transcendental, a trifle vague; there was too little said about the subject!' But the students gazed at me with admiration. Their enthusiasm is the great charm of youth. I took notes for the second and the third lectures . . . . but after that I used to improvise."

"And with success?" asked Leschnieff.

"With great success. People flocked to hear me. I opened my whole soul to them. Among them there were three, in fact four, remarkable young men; the rest only

half understood me. Still, I must acknowledge that even those who understood me, occasionally embarrassed me with their questions. But I did not lose courage. All liked me; and I gave them good marks at their examinations. But an intrigue was set on foot against me. . . . . No, it was not an intrigue; to speak plainly, I was not in the right place. I was disagreeable to my colleagues, just as they were to me. To these students in the Gymnasium I gave lectures such as one seldom hears at a university; and my hearers consequently derived but little profit from them . . . . for I was not thoroughly familiar with the facts. Besides, I was not satisfied with the pettiness of the sphere in which I was working — that has always been my weak point. I wanted radical reforms, and I am too ready to take my oath that these reforms were wise and practicable. I hoped to carry them through with the aid of the director, an excellent, honest man, with whom at first I had some influence. His wife encouraged me. I have not seen many such women, brother, in the course of my life. She was nearly forty years old, but she was as

enthusiastic for everything that was good and true as a girl of fifteen, and she was not afraid to express her opinions before any one. I shall never forget her earnestness, her purity. I already formed a plan, in conformity with her advice . . . . when secret intrigues were set at work, and all sorts of calumnies about me were whispered to her. The professor of mathematics was my bitterest enemy; he was a disagreeable, sly, vindictive man, who believed in nothing; like Pigasoff, only more intelligent. . . . . By the way, is he still living?"

"He lives, and, only think! he has married a servant-maid, who, they say, beats him."

"It serves him right. And is Natalie Alexievna well?"

"Yes."

"Is she happy?"

"Yes."

Roudine was silent for a moment.

"What was I talking about? . . . . Oh, yes, about the professor of mathematics. He had taken a great hatred to me. He compared my lectures to exhibitions of fireworks

He took hold of every one of my phrases which was not perfectly clear, and made the most of a victory over me about some insignificant work of the sixteenth century, of which I had never heard. . . . . He was suspicious of my intentions. My last soap-bubble fell on him, as on a needle, and burst. The inspector, with whom I had disagreed two or three times, prejudiced the director against me; then followed a scene in which I could not give way. I grew angry. The matter was referred to the higher authorities and I was compelled to hand in my resignation. I didn't consider myself beaten, but I wanted to show that I was not to be treated in that way. . . . . But now any one can treat me as he pleases! . . . . Now I am obliged to go away from here."

There was a moment of silence. The friends looked at one another with their heads cast down.

Roudine was the first to speak.

"Yes, brother," he began, "I can now cry with Kolzoff, 'Where hast thou brought me, my youth? I have no longer where to lay my head!' And was I really

good for nothing, and was there nothing for me to do in this world? I have often asked myself this question, and in spite of all my attempts to set myself lower in my own esteem, I can't help feeling that I have certain abilities which don't fall to the lot of every one. Why must this force remain powerless? Then, too, dost thou remember when we travelled abroad together, how self-confident and blind I was? . . . . It is true, I didn't know definitely what I wanted, I revelled in the sound of my own voice, I chased vain phantoms. But now, on the contrary, I can say aloud to the whole world what it is I want; I have nothing to hide; I am, in the fullest sense of the word, a well-meaning man; I have become humble, I am willing to adapt myself to circumstances, I have limited my wishes, I don't strive for any remote object, I confine myself to doing even the slightest service; and yet I do not succeed in anything. What is the reason of this persistent failure? Why can't I live and work like others? I no sooner get a definite position, I no sooner establish myself somewhere, than fate casts me pitilessly out again. . . . .

I begin to fear my fate. . . . . Why is this? Explain this puzzle!"

"Puzzle!" repeated Leschnieff. "It is true, thou hast always been a puzzle to me. Even in our youth, when I saw thee acting ill and speaking well, in turn, and that time after time, even then I could not understand thee clearly; that was the reason I ceased to love thee. . . . . Thou hast so much fire, so earnest a longing for the ideal" . . . .

"Words, nothing but words. Where are the deeds?" interrupted Roudine.

"They lacking! What sort of deeds?"

"What sort? Supporting a blind grandmother and a whole family by the work of one's hands, like Praschenzoff; isn't that a deed?"

"Yes, of course; but a good word is a deed, too."

Roudine looked at Leschnieff without speaking, and shook his head.

Leschnieff started to speak, but he merely passed his hand over his face.

"And so thou art going to thy country-place?"

"Yes."

"Thou hast then a farm?"

"Something of the sort. Two souls and a half. I have a hole in which I can die. Thou art probably thinking, 'Even now he can't dispense with his phrases!' Certainly phrases have been my ruin; they have destroyed me. . . . . But what I just said is no phrase; these are not phrases, brother, these wrinkles, this gray hair; these tattered elbows are no phrases. Thou hast always been severe towards me, and thou hast been right; but why be severe now, when all is finished, when there is no more oil in the lamp, when the lamp itself is shattered and the wick is nearly burned out? Brother, death must bring reconciliation at last."

Leschnieff sprang from his chair.

"Roudine!" he cried, "why speak in that way? How have I deserved such harshness? Who has made me judge, and what sort of a man should I be if the word 'phrase' could come into my head at the sight of thy

wrinkles, and thy hollow cheeks? Dost thou want to know what I think of thee? Very well! I think — this man . . . . with his talents, what might he not have attained, what earthly possessions might he not control, if he had only wished it! . . . . and I find him hungry, without a roof over his head."

"I arouse thy pity," said Roudine almost inaudibly.

"No, thou art mistaken. It is with respect that I am inspired — that is the truth. What prevented thee from living for years with thy rich friend? I am confident he would have made thy fortune sure, if thou hadst been willing to subject thyself to him. Why was it thy stay at the Gymnasium was so short? Why, why, — strange man, — whatever thy first intention, must the end always be the sacrifice of thy own interest, without taking root in any soil, however fertile it may be?"

"I can never be at peace," answered Roudine with a humble smile, "I have always been the foot-ball of fortune."

"That is true, but thou hast no rest, not because a gnawing worm drives thee on; that is not it, it is not

merely the spirit of restlessness. The fire which consumes thee is the love of truth, and in spite of all sufferings it glows in thee more strongly than in many others, who don't consider themselves egoists, and perhaps take you for an intriguer. In thy place I should have long since silenced that impulse, and should have reconciled myself with all about me; but nothing can change thee. After all these cruel deceptions, thou art no bitterer, and I am sure thou art ready to take hold of any work with all the fire of a young man."

"No, brother, now I am tired," answered Roudine, "very, very tired."

"Tired! Any one else would have died under it long ago. Thou sayest, death brings reconciliation. Why should not life? He whom life has not made indulgent for others deserves no indulgence for himself. And who can say that he does not need it? Thou hast done what was in thy power, thou hast struggled as long as thou wert able. . . . . What need of more? Our paths were different."

"Thou, brother, art a different man from me," interrupted Roudine, with a sigh.

"Our paths were different," resumed Leschnieff; "perhaps it is due to my means, my coolness, and other favoring circumstances, that nothing prevented me from sitting with folded hands, an idle spectator of the fray, while thou hadst to go down into the arena, roll up thy sleeves, and toil and struggle. Our paths were different, and yet see how near we are to one another. See, we speak the same language, we understand one another without explaining every word, we have grown up with the same feelings. There are only a few of us left; we two are the last of the Mohicans! Long ago we could part and hate one another; then the life before us seemed long; but now that our ranks are thinned, now when a new generation passes us with other aims than ours, we must stand by one another.

"Let us touch glasses, brother, as we used to, and sing 'Gaudeamus igitur.'"

They touched their glasses, and with emotion, but in

the true Russian fashion, all out of tune, they sang the old German student-song.

"Thou art really going into the country, then?" said Leschnieff after they had finished. "I don't think thou wilt stay there long, and I cannot imagine with whom, where, and how, thou wilt end thy life .... but don't forget, whatever happens, that thou hast always a refuge, a nest in which thou canst lay thy head; that's my house, dost hear, old friend? Thought has its veterans, and those who have served it deserve an asylum."

Roudine arose.

"Thanks, brother, thanks," he said, "I shall never forget thy offer. But I don't deserve it. I have wasted my life, and I have not served the ideal as I should have." ....

"Silence," exclaimed Leschnieff. "Every one is as God made him, and one can't ask him to be otherwise. Thou hast called thyself 'The Wandering Jew.' .... Perhaps after all, fate compels thee to wander eternally, perhaps thou art unconsciously fulfilling some higher destiny. Does not the saying run, We are all wandering as

God directs us? Go on, then, whither his hand leads thee!" continued Leschnieff, seeing that Roudine was looking for his hat. "Wilt thou not pass the night here?"

"I am going! Good-by! Thanks. . . . . I am sure I shall end badly."

"God alone knows. . . . . Thou art really going?"

"Yes. Good-by. Don't think too ill of me."

"Good-by! Don't think ill of me either, and don't forget what I've said. Good-by." . . . .

The friends embraced. Roudine walked away quickly.

For a long time Leschnieff walked up and down his room.

He stopped before the window, murmuring to himself, "Poor fellow!" then he sat down at the table and began a letter to his wife.

Outside the wind had risen, and was now howling gloomily around the house, while it rattled the shutters with its sudden gusts. It was the beginning of a long autumn night. Happy is he who on such a night has a

roof over his head and a warm corner which he can call his own. And may God aid all homeless wanderers!

It was hot noon of the 24th of June, 1848. The rising of the *ateliers nationaux* was almost suppressed; a battalion of troops of the line was storming a barricade in one of the narrow streets of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. A few cannon-balls had already destroyed it, the defenders who survived were retreating, only caring for their own safety, when suddenly there appeared on the top of the ruins of the barricade a tall man, with flowing white hair. He wore an old coat, with a red sash about his waist, and a straw hat on his head. In one hand he bore a red banner, in the other a short, dull sabre, and he was shouting with a sharp, piercing voice while he tried to make signs with his banner and sabre. A Chasseur de Vincennes took aim — fired — the banner slipped from his hand, and the man fell slowly on his face to the ground. . . . . The bullet had gone through his heart.

"*Tiens!*" said one of the fugitives to his comrade, "*voila qu'on nous a tué le Polonais.*"

"The devil!" said the other, "*sauvons-nous!*" and they both sprang into the half-opened door-way of a neighboring house.

This "Polonais" was Dimitri Roudine.

THE END.

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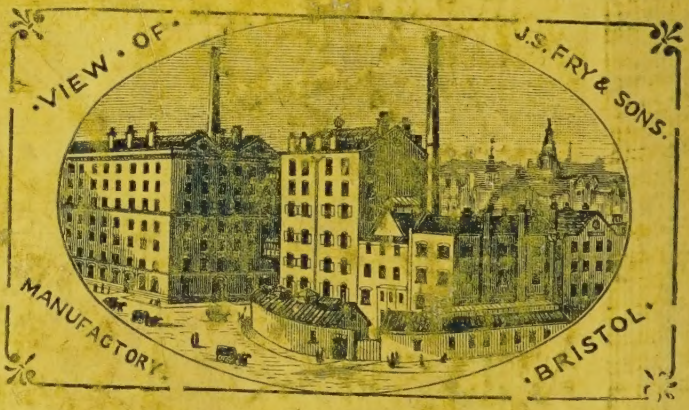

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